GUY HARRIS THE RUNAWAY

By HARRY CASTLEMON

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Julian Mortimer," "The Boy Trapper," "Sportsman's Club Series," "The Gunboat Series," etc., etc.

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CHAPTER I.

THE AFFAIR OF THE MATCH-BOX.

ELL, Guy Harris, I have only one word to say to you. If you think you can play off on me in this way, you are very much mistaken. I will post you among the fellows as a boy who is too mean to pay his honest debts."

"I don't care if you do, George Wolcom. I'll tell the fellows in return that I have no debts hanging over me, and that you are a boy who doesn't do as he agrees. I wanted a cross-gun; I tried to make one and failed. You said you knew how to handle carpenters' tools and would make me one. I described to you just what I wanted, and you told me that you could fill the bill, and that the gun, when completed, would be worth half a dollar. What sort of a thing have you given me? Look at this," continued the speaker, holding out at arm's length a piece of wood which might have been taken for a cross-gun, although it looked about as much like a ball-club; "I can make a better one myself."

"Then you don't intend to pay me?"

"Of course I do, when you bring me such a gun as I told you I wanted."

"But you won't pay me for the one I have already made for you?"

"No, sir, I won't."

"Very well; but bear in mind that I am a boy who never let's one do him a mean trick without paying him back in his own coin. I'll be even with you for swindling me."

"Oh, Guy! I say. Guy Harris, hold on a minute."

The two boys, between whom the conversation above recorded took place, stopped when they heard these words, and looking across the street saw Tom Proctor running toward them. One arm was buried to the elbow in his pocket, and under the other he carried a beautiful snow-white dove, which was fluttering its wings and trying to escape from his grasp.

"See here, Guy!" exclaimed Tom as he came up, "I have just been over to your house, where I found my pigeon, which I lost about a week ago. Your mother said it came to your barn, and that you shut it up to keep it for me. Now that was a neighborly act, and I want to repay it. Here's that box you have so often tried to buy from me."

As Tom said this he pulled his hand out of his pocket and gave Guy the article in question, which proved to be a brass match-box. It was not a very valuable thing, but it had a revolving top secured by a curiously contrived spring, was stamped all over with figures of wild ducks, deer and rabbits, and was altogether different from anything of the kind that Guy had ever seen before.

For some reason or other he had long shown a desire to obtain possession of this box, but the owner could not be induced to part with it.

Before he could express his thanks for the gift Tom was half-way across the street on his way home.

"This is just the thing I wanted," said Guy joyfully, as he and George Wolcom resumed their walk. "I shall think of Tom every time I look at this box when I am out on the prairie."

"When you are out on the prairie?" echoed George. "What do you mean by that?"

"Oh, it is my secret. You may know it some day, but not now. What do you suppose is the reason why I want a cross-gun?"

"Why, to kill birds with."

"No, sir; I want to practice shooting at a mark. I shall have use for a rifle every hour in the day before I am many months older."

"You will? Where are you going?"

"You needn't ask questions, for I sha'n't answer them," said Guy, shutting the box with a click, and making a motion to put it into his pocket.

"Wait a second," exclaimed George suddenly. "I know why Tom Proctor was generous enough to give you that box. It will be of no use to you for the spring is broken."

"It isn't either," replied Guy.

"Yes it is; I saw it. Hand it out here and I will show you."

Without hesitation Guy passed the box over to his companion, who, after opening and shutting it a few times, and making a pretense of examining the spring, coolly put it into his own pocket. Guy looked at him in great surprise, but George walked on without noticing him.

"Now that's the biggest piece of impudence I ever witnessed," said Guy at length. "I'd like to know what you mean by it."

"Didn't I tell you that I always get even with a fellow who does me a mean trick?" asked George, in reply. "I'll keep this box as part payment for the cross-gun I made you."

"Do you call this thing a cross-gun?" demanded Guy, once more holding up the stick he carried in his hand; "I don't, and I sha'n't pay you a cent for it either. Give me that box."

"Give me that half-dollar you owe me."

"I don't owe you any half-dollar. Here, take your old cross-gun and give me my box."

"It isn't my gun—it is yours; and you can't have your box till I get my just dues. You may depend upon that."

A long and spirited debate followed this reply, and

would most likely have ended in blows had the two boys been of equal age and size, for Guy was a spirited fellow, and always ready to stand up for his rights.

George was an overgrown lout of a boy, and plumed himself on being the bully of his school. Guy knew better than to attempt to take the box from him by force, so he followed along after him, talking all the while, and trying to convince him that he was in the wrong, and that he showed anything but a manly spirit in taking so unfair an advantage of a boy so much smaller than himself.

But George, being pig-headed and vindictive, could not be made to look at the matter in that light. He kept tantalizing his companion by turning the box in his hand, praising the beauty of the figures stamped upon it, and asking Guy now and then if he had anything else he could keep his matches in when he reached the prairie.

Presently the two boys arrived in front of the house in which Guy lived—a neat little edifice, with a graveled carriage-way leading upon one side, and trees and shrubbery growing all around it. Guy halted at the gate, and George, believing that if his companion would not pay him for his cross-gun he might be willing to give half a dollar to get possession of the match-box again, stopped also to argue the matter.

While the discussion of the points Guy had raised was going on, the gate leading into the next yard was opened, and a bright, lively-looking fellow, Henry Stewart by name, and one of Guy's particular friends, came out. He greeted Guy pleasantly, and was about to pass on, when he noticed the look of trouble on his face, and stopped to inquire the reason for it. The matter was explained in few words, and Henry turned and gave the bully a good looking over. Being a great lover of justice, he was indignant at the treatment his crony had received.

"Well," said George, returning Henry's gaze with interest; "you have nothing to do with this business, and if you are wise you will keep out of it."

"I want that box!" said Henry firmly.

"If you get it before I am ready to give it to you," returned George, "just send me word, will you?"

Before this defiance had fairly left his lips the bully was rolling over and over in the gutter, which was in a very moist condition, owing to the heavy rain that had fallen during the previous night, while his antagonist stood erect on the sidewalk, flushed and excited, but without even a wrinkle in his clean, white wristbands, or a spot of mud on his well-blacked boots. In falling, George dropped the match-box, which Henry caught up and put into his pocket.

This proceeding was witnessed by two women—Henry's mother and Guy's step-mother. The latter made no move, but treasured up the scene in her memory to be repeated in a greatly exaggerated form to Mr. Harris when he came home to dinner, while Henry's mother hurried down the stairs and out to the gate. She called to her son, who promptly answered the summons, and in reply to her anxious inquiries repeated the story of Guy's troubles.

I do not know what his mother said to him, but I am sure it could not have been anything very harsh, for a moment afterward Henry came gayly down the walk, winked at Guy as he passed, and looked pleasantly toward the discomfited bully, who, having picked himself up from the gutter, was making the best of his way to the other side of the street, holding one hand to his head and the other to his back, both of which had been pretty badly bruised by the hard fall he had received.

"Now, that Hank Stewart is the right sort!" thought Guy, gazing admiringly after the erect, slender figure of his friend as it moved rapidly down the street. "If it hadn't been for him I should never have seen this box again. I shouldn't like to lose it, for I shall have use for matches after I become a hunter and trapper, and I shall need something to carry them in. This box is just the thing. If I wasn't afraid Hank would refuse, I would ask him to go with me. I must have a com-

panion, for of course I don't want to go riding about over those prairies on my wild mustang all by myself while there are so many hostile Indians about, and Hank is the fellow I'd like to have with me. He knows everything about animals and the woods; he's the best fisherman in Norwall; he never misses a double shot at ducks or quails; and I never saw a boy that could row or sail a boat with him. Why, it wouldn't be long before he would be the best hunter and trapper that ever tracked the prairie. I'll think about it, and perhaps I shall make up my mind to ask him to go with me instead of Bob Walker."

Thus soliloquizing Guy made his way through the yard to the carriage-house and mounted the stairs leading to the rooms above. There were three of them. The first and largest served in summer as a place of storage for Mr. Harris' sleighs and buffalo-robes, and in winter for his buggy and family carriage. The second was the room in which the coachman slept, and the third Guy had appropriated to his own use.

Here he had collected a lot of trumpery of all sorts, which he called his "curiosities," and of which he took the greatest possible care. The members of the family, and those of his young friends who had seen the inside of this room, thought that Guy had shown strange taste in making his selections, for there was not an article in it that was worth saving as a curiosity, and but few that could under any circumstances be of the least use to him.

On a nail opposite the door hung a rubber blanket with a hole in the center, so that it could be worn over one's shoulders like a cloak; from another was suspended a huge powder-horn; and on a third hung a rusty carving-knife, which one of Guy's companions had sold to him with the assurance that it was a hunting-knife. Then there was a portion of an old harpoon which Guy said was a spear-head, a pair of well-worn top-boots, an old horse-blanket and a clothes-line with an iron ring fastened to one end of it. This last Guy

called a lasso. He spent many an hour in practicing with it, whirling it around his head and trying to throw the running noose over a stake he had planted in the yard.

One corner of the room was occupied by a pile of old iron, to which horseshoes, broken frying-pans and articles of like description were added from time to time. Whenever this pile attained a certain size it would always disappear, no one seemed to know how or when, and Guy would go about for a day or two jingling some coppers in his pocket. When he had handled them and feasted his eyes on them to his satisfaction, he would stow them in an old buckskin purse which he kept in his trunk.

In another corner of the room was a large bag, into which Guy put everything in the shape of rags that he could pick up about the house. When filled it was empted somehow, and Guy had a few more coppers to be put away in his purse. It was well for our hero that his father and mother did not know what he intended to do with the money he earned in this way.

"Nobody except me sees any sense in all this," said Guy, as he closed the door behind him, and gazed about the room with a smile of satisfaction. "There isn't a thing here that will not be of use to me by and by. That rubber blanket will keep me dry when it rains. That powder-horn I shall have filled at St. Joseph or Independence, and, as a rifle requires but little ammunition, it will hold enough to last me during a year's hunting. That knife will answer my purpose as well as one worth two dollars and a half, for I can sharpen it, and make a sheath for it out of the skin of the first buffalo or antelope I kill. I must sell my iron again before long. How the fellows laugh at me because I am all the while looking out for old horseshoes and such things! But I don't care. I've made many a dime by it, and dimes make dollars. I never neglect a chance to turn a penny, but I haven't yet saved a quarter of what I need. I found half a dollar the other day by keeping my eyes

turned down as I walked along the street, and that was a big lift, I tell you."

As Guy said this he opened a small tool-chest that stood beside the pile of old iron. In this were stowed away a variety of articles he had picked up at odd times and in different places, and which he thought he might find useful when he reached the prairie.

There was a small bundle of wax-ends, such as shoemakers use. These would come handy when he needed a pair of good leggings, or when his moccasins, saddle, or bridle, got out of repair. There were several iron and bone rings he could use in making lassos or martingales for his horse; three or four pounds of lead for his bullets, and a ladle to melt it in; half a dozen jackknives, some whole and sound, others broken beyond all hope of repair; a multitude of lines, fish-hooks, sinkers and bobbers, which he intended to use on the mountain streams and lakes of which he had read so much; a few steel-traps, all bent and worthless, and also several "figure fours" which he had made so as to have them ready for use when he reached his hunting-grounds. In this receptacle Guy placed his match-box, congratulating himself on having secured another valuable addition to his outfit. This done, he bent his steps toward his house.

When he entered the dining-room he found his father and mother seated at the table, and he knew by the expression on their faces, as well as by the words that fell upon his ear, that there was a storm brewing. His mother had been relating the particulars of the encounter between Henry Stewart and George Wolcom, and repeating the discussion between Guy and the bully that led to it, all of which she had seen and overheard from her chamber window, and our hero came in just in time to hear her declare:

"I never in my life saw boys behave so disgracefully. Mrs. Stewart ran out of the house and tried to put a stop to the disturbance, but they paid not the least attention to her."

"Guy," said Mrs. Harris, "where is that article, whatever it is, that has been the cause of all this trouble?"

"I have put it away," was the reply.

"Go and get it immediately."

Guy retraced his steps to the carriage-house, and taking out the match-box, carried it to his father, who looked at it contemptuously.

"This is a pretty thing to raise a fight about, isn't it?" he exclaimed. "Take it and throw it away."

"But, father," began Guy.

"Do you hear me?" demanded Mr. Harris fiercely. "Throw it away."

Guy knew better than to hesitate longer. Mr. Harris was a stern man, and in his efforts to "bring his boy up properly," sometimes acted more like a tyrant than a father.

Taking the box, Guy walked out of the door and disappeared behind the carriage-house.

"I will throw it away," said he to himself, "but I'll be careful to throw it where I can find it again. I never heard of such injustice. I wasn't in any way to blame for the trouble, for I didn't ask Hank to pitch into George Wolcom and get my box for me; and neither did Mrs. Stewart run out and try to put a stop to the fight. It was all over before she showed herself. But that's just the way with all step-mothers, I have heard, and I know it is so with mine. She runs to father with every little thing I do, and seems to delight in having me hauled over the coals. It isn't so with Ned. He can do as he pleases, but I must walk straight, or suffer for it. I sha'n't stand it much longer, and that's all about it. Stay there till I want you again."

Guy threw the box into a cluster of currant bushes at the back of the garden, and after noting the spot where it fell, went slowly back to the dining-room and sat down to his dinner.

CHAPTER II.

SOME SCRAPS OF GUY'S HISTORY.

I MUST say before I go further, that Guy Harris is not an imaginary character. He has an existence as surely as you have, boy reader. He is to-day an active professional man, and he has consented to have the story of his boyhood written in the hope that it may serve as a warning, should it chance to fall into the hands of any discontented young fellow who is tempted to do as he did.

Guy lived in the city of Norwall—that name will do as well as any other—on the shore of one of the great lakes. When he was a few months old his mother died, and a year afterward his father married again. Of course Guy was too young to remember his lost parent, and until he was fourteen years old he knew nothing of this little episode in the family history. Mr. and Mrs. Harris never enlightened him, because they feared that something unpleasant might result from it. Having often heard the boy express his opinion of step-mothers in the most emphatic language, and declare that he would not live a day under his father's roof with a stranger to rule over him, they thought it best to allow him to remain in ignorance of the real facts of the case. And Guy never suspected anything. It is true that he was sometimes sadly puzzled to know how it happened that he had three grandfathers, while all the boys of his acquaintance had only two but when he spoke of it to his mother, she always had the headache too badly to talk about that or anything else.

Guy often told himself that his mother was not like other boys' mothers. He cherished an unbounded

affection for her, and stood ready to show it by every means in his power; but there was something about her that kept him at a distance. There was not that familiarity between him and his mother that he saw between other boys and their mothers. There was a coolness in her demeanor toward him that she did not even exhibit toward strangers. There was a wonderful difference, too, in her treatment of him and his half-brother, Ned, who was at this time about nine years of age. Ned came and went as he pleased. The front gate was no barrier to him, and he always had a dime or two in his pocket to spend for peanuts and chocolate creams. If he wanted to go over to a neighbor's for an hour's visit, or wished to spend an afternoon skating on the pond, he applied to his mother, who seldom refused him permission. If Guy desired the same privilege, he was told to consult with his father, who generally said: "No, sir; you'll meet with bad company there;" or, "You'll break through and be drowned;" or, if he granted the request, he would do it after so much hesitation, and with so great reluctance that it made an unpleasant impression on Guy's mind, and marred his day's sport.

At last a few scraps of the family history, which his parents had been so careful to keep from him, came to Guy's knowledge. Through one of the neighborhood gossips he learned, to his intense amazement, that Mr. Harris had been twice married; that his first wife had lain for almost fourteen years in her grave in a distant State; and that the woman who sat at the head of the table, who so closely watched all his movements during his father's absence, and whom he called mother, was not his mother after all. Then a good many things which hitherto he had not been able to understand became perfectly clear to him. He knew now where his three grandfathers came from, and could easily account for the partiality shown his half-brother, Ned. But he wanted proof, and to obtain it laid the matter before his Aunt Lucy, who, after telling him how sorry she was that he had found it out, reluctantly confirmed the story.

Guy felt as if he were utterly alone in the world after this; but when he had thought about it a while, he took a sensible view of the case. He loved his father's wife, and he did not allow the facts with which he had just been made acquainted to make any change in his feelings or demeanor toward her. Indeed, he was more attentive to her than before; he tried to anticipate and gratify her desires as far as lay in his power, and in every way did his best to please her; but the result was most discouraging. With all his efforts he could not win one approving word or smile. His mother was colder and more distant than ever, and from that time Guy's home was somehow made very uncomfortable for him.

Mr. and Mrs. Harris were good people, as the world goes. They were prominent members of the church, and held high positions in society. Abroad they were as agreeable and pleasant as people could be, but the atmosphere of home grew dark the moment they crossed the threshold. Mr. Harris, especially, was a perfect thunder-cloud; his very presence had a depressing effect upon the family circle. When he came home from his place of business at night, he generally had something to say in the way of greeting to his wife and Ned, but Guy was seldom noticed, unless he had been doing something wrong, and then more words were devoted to him than he cared to listen to.

When supper was over, Mr. Harris sat down to his paper, and until ten o'clock never looked up or spoke. His wife sewed, read novels, or played backgammon with Ned, and Guy was left to himself. His father never talked to him about his sports and pastimes, his boyish trials, disappointments, hopes and aspirations, as other fathers talk to their sons. He never allowed him to go outside the gate—except upon very rare occasions—unless he was going to school or was sent on an errand. He never gave him a cent to spend for himself, except on Christmas, when, in addition to making him numerous presents (which Guy was so repeatedly and emphat-

ically enjoined to take care of that he almost hated them as well as the giver), he opened his heart and presented him with a quarter of a dollar. He wasn't going to ruin his boy by giving him money, he said.

Up to the time that he was fourteen years old Guy had the making of a man in him. He was smart, honest, truthful, generous to a fault, and attentive to his books, it being his father's desire, as well as his own, that he should enter college. I wish I could take him through my story with all these good traits about him; but candor compels me to say that at the time he was presented to the reader he was a different sort of boy altogether. In the neighborhood in which he lived he bore an excellent reputation. People called him a good boy, referred to the fact that he was never seen prowling about the streets after dark, and spoke of the promptness with which he obeyed the commands of his parents. But the truth was that at heart Guy was no better than any other boy. He stayed at home of evenings, not because it was a pleasant place and he loved to be there, but for the reason that he was not allowed to go out; and he obeyed his parents' orders the moment they were issued, because he knew that he would be whipped if he did not. All his generous impulses had been crushed out of him by the stern policy pursued by his father, who believed in ruling by the rod, instead of by love. From being a frank, honorable boy, above doing a mean action and abhorring a lie, Guy became sneaking and sly—so sly that it was almost an impossibility to fasten the guilt of any wrong-doing upon him. He learned to despise his home, with its thunder-clouds and incessant reprimands and fault-findings, and longed to get off by himself somewhere—anywhere, so that he could enjoy a few minutes' peace. He had hit upon a plan to rid himself of his troubles, and now we will tell what it was, and how it resulted.

CHAPTER III.

GUY'S HOME AND HENRY'S.

S CAN well be imagined, Guy felt very sore after the affair of the match-box. His whole soul rebelled against the petty tyranny and injustice of his father, and while he was at school that afternoon his mind dwelt so much upon it that he stood "zero" in every one of his lessons, and failed so miserably in his philosophy that he narrowly escaped the disgrace—and it was considered a lasting disgrace by the boys belonging to the Brown Grammar School—of being kept after hours to commit his task.

When four o'clock came Guy drew a long breath of relief, and chucked his books under his desk so spitefully that he made a great deal of racket, which caused the teacher to look sharply in his direction. Guy, knowing that he was suspected, turned and stared at Tom Proctor, who sat next behind him, as if to say, "*There* is the guilty one," and Tom gave the accusation a flat denial by turning about and looking at the youth who sat next behind *him*. This is a way that some school-boys have of doing business, as you know. In a case like this a scholar can "carry tales" and accuse a school-mate of breaking the rules without saying a word.

When school was dismissed Guy was the first one out of the gate. Some of the Delta Club were going over to their grounds to engage in a practice game of ball, and as Guy belonged to the first nine, of course he was expected to accompany them; but he, knowing that he must first go home and ask permission of his mother, which would most likely be refused, replied that he had something else to do, and hurried off as fast as his legs

could carry him. Arriving at his father's gate, he slackened his pace and walked leisurely through the yard into the garden. He went straight to the currant bush, behind which he had thrown his match-box, and finding his treasure safe, put it into his pocket and returned to the carriage-house. When he thought he could do so without being seen by any one, he bounded up the stairs, entered his curiosity-shop, and noiselessly closing the door, locked himself in.

"Now then," he exclaimed with a triumphant air, "if mother and Ned will only let me alone for about an hour, I can enjoy myself. I haven't seen a minute's peace since twelve o'clock. Father thought he was very sharp when he ordered me to throw this box away," he added, as he opened the small tool-chest and deposited his recovered property therein, "but I am a little sharper than he is. Whew! wouldn't I get my jacket dusted though, if he knew what I have done?"

As Guy said this, he unlocked a small compartment in the tool-chest and took out a book bound in brown and gold, and bearing the title, "The Boy Trappers of the Platte." Closing the chest, and seating himself upon it, he opened the book, and for two hours reveled in bear fights, adventures with the Indians, and hunting and trapping scenes without number. For once that day he was supremely happy. He forgot all his troubles, and lived only among the imaginary characters and amid the imaginary scenes presented to him on the printed page. Two or three times while he was thus engaged, Ned came up, tried the door, and called to him; but Guy only stopped long enough to flourish his fist in the air with a significant gesture, as if he would have been glad of a chance to use it on Ned's head, and then went on with his reading, until the creaking of the gate, and the sound of wheels on the carriage-way, told him that his father had arrived.

"Dear me, how provoking!" exclaimed Guy, jumping quickly to his feet and putting the book away in the tool-chest, "Just as I get to the most interesting part

of a chapter, I must be interrupted. I wish father had stayed away ten minutes longer; or, better than that, I wish he was like other fathers, and would let me take this book into the house and read it openly and aboveboard, as I should like to do. He is so opposed to works of fiction that I wonder he lets Ned read Robinson Crusoe. He talks of going to the White Mountains this summer, and taking mother and Ned with him, and leaving me at home to punish me for going in swimming the other day. Don't I hope he will do it, though? It wouldn't be punishment at all, if he only knew it. I'd have more fun than I have seen for ten years. I'd read every book in Henry Stewart's library."

Having closed and locked the tool-chest, Guy went cautiously to the window, and when he saw his father get out of his buggy and enter the house, he slipped quietly out of the room and down the stairs. He passed an uncomfortable quarter of an hour before the supper-bell rang, strolling about the yard with his hands in his pockets, and scarcely knowing what to do with himself. It seemed so hard to come back to earth again after living for two hours among the exciting scenes which his favorite author had created for his amusement.

Supper over, there was another hour to be passed in some way before the gas was lighted. His father talked politics with the next-door neighbor; Ned played graces with his mother; and wide-awake, restless Guy was as usual left to himself. No one took the least notice of him. He must have something to do—it wasn't in him to remain long inactive—and as there was a strong breeze blowing, he thought he would raise his kite. He could not go into the street for that purpose, so he climbed to the top of the barn; but his father quickly discovered him, and ordered him down.

Then he tried it in the garden, but the trees were thick, and the kite's tail was always in the way. It caught in a cherry tree, and as Guy was about to mount among the branches to disengage it, his father again interfered. He wasn't going to have his fine ox-hearts

"FOR ONCE THAT DAY, GUY WAS SUPREMELY HAPPY."—[See page 191.]

broken down for the sake of all the kites in the world.

By the aid of the step-ladder Guy finally released the kite, and made one more attempt to raise it, this time by running along the carriage-way; but by an unlucky step he left the point of his boot on one of the flower-beds, and that set his mother's tongue in motion. His father heard it, and turned sharply upon him.

"Guy," said he, "what in the world is the matter with you to-night? Put that kite away, and go into the house."

Guy's under lip dropped down, and with mutterings not loud, but deep, he prepared to obey.

His father's quick eye noticed the drooping lip, and his quick ear caught the muttering.

"Come here, sir," said he angrily.

Guy approached, and his father, seizing his arm with a grip that brought tears to his eyes, shook him until every tooth in his head rattled.

"What do you mean by going into the sulks when I tell you to do anything?" he demanded. "Straighten out that face! Now, then," he added after a moment's pause, during which Guy choked back his tears and assumed as pleasant an expression as could be expected of a boy whose arm was being squeezed by a strong man until it was black and blue, "go into the house and stay there."

The father could compel obedience, but his son was too much like himself to be easily conquered. He could control his actions as long as he was in sight, but he could not control his thoughts. Guy's heart was filled with hate.

"This is a fair sample of the manner in which I am treated every day of my life," he muttered under his breath as he stowed his kite away in its accustomed place. "They'll think of it and be sorry some day, for if I once get away from here I'll never come back. I never want to see any of them again. I can't please them, and there is no use trying. Nobody cares for me, and the sooner I am out of the way the better."

When Guy entered the sitting-room he found his mother there reading a highly-seasoned novel by a popular sensational writer, and Ned deeply interested in "Robinson Crusoe." The piano was open and Guy walked to it and sat down. There was a piece of music upon it, entitled "'Tis Home Where'er the Heart Is." As Guy ran his fingers over the keys he thought of all that had happened that day, and told himself that if those words were true his home was a long way from Norwall.

"That will do, Guy," said his mother suddenly. "My head aches, and it is not necessary that you should practice now."

Guy began to get desperate. He couldn't sit around all the evening and do nothing—no healthy boy could. He went to the library, and knowing that he was doing something that would certainly prove the occasion of more fault-finding, took a book from some snug corner in which he had hidden it, and sat down to read.

In a few minutes his father came in. He picked up his paper and was about to seat himself in his easy chair when he caught sight of Guy and stopped. The latter did not look up, but watched his father out of the corner of his eye.

"Guy," said Mr. Harris sharply.

"Sir!" said the boy.

"What have you there?"

"'Cecil,'" was the reply.

"Cecil who? Cecil what?"

"That's the name of the book."

"Let me see it."

Mr. Harris took the volume and ran his eye over the pages, while a look of contempt settled on his face. Had he taken the trouble to read the book he would have found that it was the history of a youth who was turned out into the world at an early age by the death of his parents; that it described the trials and temptations that fell to his lot, and told how he made a man of himself at last. But Mr. Harris, like many others,

condemned without knowing what he was condemning.

Three words on the title-page told him all he cared to know about the work. It was a "Book for Boys." All books for boys were works of fiction, and he never intended that Guy should read a work of fiction if he could prevent it.

"Where did you get this?" demanded Mr. Harris.

"I borrowed it of Henry Stewart. His father bought it for him last week, and he is a member of your church, too," answered Guy, seizing the opportunity to put in a home-thrust.

"I don't care if he is. I have no objection to your associating with Henry, for he is a good boy in some respects, although it is the greatest wonder in the world to me that he hasn't been ruined by his father's ignorance beyond all hope of redemption. I am surprised at Brother Stewart—I am really. What's that sticking out of your pocket?"

"It is a copy of the New York *Magazine*."

"Let me see it."

Guy handed out the paper, and as Mr. Harris slowly unfolded it the sneer once more settled on his face. He handled the sheet with the tips of his fingers, as if he feared that the touch might contaminate him.

"'Nick Whiffles!' said he, reading the title of one of the stories. "Who is he? Who owns him?"

"I borrowed the paper of Henry Stewart. His father has taken it for years, and says he couldn't do without it."

"I don't care what his father says. His opinions have no weight with me. Who's Nick Whiffles?"

"He was a famous Indian-fighter and guide."

"Oh, he was, was he? Well, you just guide him out of this house, and never bring him or anybody like him here again. I won't have such trash under my roof. Guy, it does seem as if you were determined to ruin yourself. Don't you know that the reading of such tales as this unfits you for anything like work? Don't you know that after a while nothing but this light reading will satisfy you?"

"No, sir, I don't," replied Guy boldly. "Henry Stewart told me that he didn't care a snap for history until he had read the 'Black Knight.' Through that story he became interested in the manners and customs of the people who lived during the Middle Ages, and he wanted to know more about them. He read everything on the subject that he could get his hands on, and Professor Johnson says he is better posted in history than half the teachers in the public schools.

"And all through the reading of a novel?" exclaimed Mr. Harris. "I know better. There's not a word of truth in it. This bosh has a very different effect upon you at any rate. You waste all your spare time upon it, and the consequence is, you are getting to be a worthless, disobedient boy."

"But, father, I must have something to read."

"Don't I know that; and don't I get you a new book every Christmas? Where's that volume entitled 'Thoughts on Death; or, Lectures for Young Men,' that I bought for you three weeks ago? You haven't looked into it, I'll warrant."

Mr. Harris was wrong there. Guy *had* looked into it, and he had tried to read it, but it was written in such language that he could not understand it. At the time his father gave him this book he had presented Ned with a box of fine water-colors—the very thing Guy had long wished for. Why had not Mr. Harris consulted the tastes and wishes of the elder, as well as those of the younger son?

"Return that book and paper to their owner at once, and don't bring anything like them into this house again," repeated Mr. Harris.

"May I visit with Henry a little while?" asked the boy.

"Well—I—y-es. You may stay there a quarter of an hour."

"It's a wonder," thought Guy, as he picked up his cap and started for Mr. Stewart's house. "Why didn't he tell me that home is the place for me after dark? That's the reply he generally makes."

As Guy climbed over the fence that ran between his father's yard and Mr. Stewart's he heard a great noise and hubbub. He listened and found that the sounds came from the house he was about to visit.

As he drew nearer he saw that one of the window curtains was raised, and that he could obtain a view of all that was going on in Mr. Stewart's back parlor. The occupants were engaged in a game of blind-man's buff. Mr. Stewart, his eyes covered with a handkerchief, and his hands spread out before him, was advancing cautiously toward one side of the room, evidently searching for Henry, who had squeezed himself into one corner, with a chair in front of him. The other children were probably trying to divert their father's attention, for two of them were clinging to his coat-tails, while the eldest daughter would now and then go up and pull his whiskers or pat him on the back. Mrs. Stewart sat in a remote corner sewing and smiling pleasantly, seemingly unmindful of the deafening racket raised by the players.

"Humph!" said Guy, "it will be of no use for me to ask Henry to go with me. I wouldn't go myself if I had a home like this. How would my father look with a handkerchief over his eyes, and Ned and me hanging to his coat-tails? And wouldn't mother have an awful headache though, if this was going on in her house?"

It certainly was a pleasant scene that Guy looked in upon, and he stood at the window watching the players until he began to be ashamed of himself. Then he mounted the steps and knocked at the door.

Mrs. Stewart admitted him, and he entered the parlor just in time to see Henry's father pounce upon him and hold him fast.

"Aha! I've caught you, sir," said Mr. Stewart, with a laugh that did one's heart good, "and now we had betser stop, for we are arousing the neighbors. Here's Guy come in to see what's the matter."

"No, sir," replied the visitor, "I just came over to return a book and paper I borrowed of Henry."

"Why, you haven't read them, have you?" asked his friend. "I gave them to you only yesterday."

"I know it; but father told me to bring them back. He won't permit me to read them. He says they are nothing but trash."

Henry elevated his eyebrows and looked at his father, who in turn looked inquiringly at Guy.

"Does your father ever read the New York *Magazine?*" asked Mr. Stewart.

"No, *sir!*" replied Guy emphatically.

"Ah! that accounts for it. If he would take the trouble to look at it, he might change his opinion of it. A paper that numbers ministers among its contributors, that advocates temperance and reform, and shows up the follies of the day in its stories, can't be a very dangerous thing to put into the hands of the youth of the land. Here is an article by a minister in the paper we have been reading to-night. Take it over and show it to your father."

"I wouldn't dare do it, sir," returned Guy blushing. "He told me to guide Nick Whiffles out of the house, and never guide him in again."

"Oh, that's where the shoe pinches, is it? Well, *I* think Nick very good in his place. Indeed, I confess to a great liking for the old fellow."

"He's just splendid," said Henry.

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, you know," continued Mr. Stewart. "After you and Henry have sat for six long hours on your hard desk at school, a game of ball or a sail on the lake does you a world of good. If you should live a week or two on corn-bread and bacon, or pork and beans, you would be glad to have a piece of pie or cake, wouldn't you? The mind requires recreation and change as much as the body, and where can you find it if it be not in a good story by some sprightly author? Of course the thing can be carried to excess, and so can eating. One can read himself into an unhealthy frame of mind as easily as he can gorge himself into dyspepsia."

When Mr. Stewart had said this much he stopped and took up his paper. It wasn't for him to criticise or find fault with the rules his neighbor had made regarding his son's reading.

Guy, having an object to accomplish before he returned home, and knowing that time was precious, declined the chair offered him, and after taking leave of the family, intimated to Henry that he had something particular to say to him. The latter accompanied him to the fence, and Guy leaned upon it, utterly at a loss how to broach the subject uppermost in his mind.

CHAPTER IV.

THE READING LESSON.

UY DID not know how to begin the conversation. He wanted to approach the subject gradually, for he believed that some little strategy would be necessary in order to bring Henry to his way of thinking, but somehow the words he wanted would not come, and seeing that his friend was getting impatient, he plunged into it blindly:

"How would you like to be a hunter and trapper?" he asked.

"I don't know anything about trapping, but I like hunting as well as any boy in the world," said Henry.

"I mean how would you like to make a business of it, and spend your life in the woods or on the prairie?"

"I don't know, but I am going to try it a little while this fall. Father owns some land in Michigan that he has never seen, and about the first of September he and I are going up to take a look at it. His agent writes that game is abundant, and I am going to buy a rifle before we start."

"Well, if I had a chance like that I'd never come back again. I'd stay in the woods."

"Oh, my father wouldn't let me."

"I don't suppose he would, but you could do as I intend to do—run away."

Henry straightened up and looked at his companion without speaking.

"Oh, I mean it," said Guy with a decided nod of his head. "I am tired of staying here. I am weary of this continual scolding and fault-finding, and am going to get away where I can take a little comfort. I have

always wanted to be a hunter. I have got my plans all laid, and I want some good fellow for a companion, for I should be lonely if I were to go by myself. I'd rather have you than anybody else, and if you will go we'll take the 'Boy Trappers' with us. That book will tell us just what we will have to do. It tells how to build wigwams, how to trap beaver and otter, and catch fish through the ice; how to make moccasins, leggings and hunting-shirts; how to catch wild horses; how to preserve the skins of wild animals—in fact, everything we want to know we will find there."

"Where do you want to go?" asked Henry.

"Out to the Rocky Mountains."

"What will you do when you get there?"

"We'll hunt and trap during the spring and fall, and when summer comes we'll jump on our horses, take our furs to the trading-posts and sell them."

"And what will we do during the winter?"

"We'll have a nice little cabin in some pleasant valley among the mountains, such as the boy trapper had, and we'll pass the time in curing our furs and fighting the Indians. That is what they did, you know. I tell you, Hank," said Guy with great enthusiasm, "it wouldn't be long before we would become as famous as either Kit Carson or Captain Bridges! What's the matter with you?" he added, looking suspiciously at his friend, who seemed on the point of strangling.

Henry, who had listened in utter amazement to what Guy had to say, could control himself no longer. Clinging to the fence with both hands he threw back his head and broke out into a shout of laughter that was heard full a block away.

"I don't see anything so funny about it," said Guy indignantly. "I am in earnest."

"Oh, dear!" said Henry, after he had laughed until his jaws and sides ached. "I know this will be the death of me. Why, Guy, what in the world put such a ridiculous notion into your head?"

"I don't call it a ridiculous notion. If the boy

trappers could live that way I don't see why we couldn't. I guess we are as smart and as brave as they were."

This set Henry to going again. It was some minutes before he could speak.

"Do you believe that book is true?" he asked.

"Of course I do."

"Why, Guy, I didn't think you were such a dunce. The idea that three boys, the oldest of them only seventeen years of age, could live as they did, surrounded by savage beasts and hostile Indians, and get into such scrapes as they did, and come out without a scratch. Common sense ought to teach you better than that. Those boy trappers never had an existence except in the brain of the man who wrote the book."

"Then why did he write it?" demanded Guy.

"What makes you play base-ball and cricket, and why do you go fishing and boat-riding every chance you get? Such sports are not necessary to your existence—you could live without them—but they serve to fill up the time when you don't feel like doing anything else. That's one reason why books like 'Boy Trappers' are written—to keep you in the house and help you while away a leisure hour that you might otherwise spend in the streets with bad boys. Oh, Guy! Guy!"

"Now, don't you begin your laughing again," said his companion.

At this moment a door opened and the boys heard Mr. Harris calling.

"Guy!" he shouted.

"Sir!" was the response.

"Come in now."

"What's the matter?" asked Henry.

"Oh, we have a reading lesson every night, and I have to help," replied Guy with great disgust. "We're reading Bancroft's History of the United States, and I despise it. I can't understand half of it, but father makes me read aloud twenty minutes every night, and scolds because I can't tell him the meaning of all the hard words. Now, Hank, are you going with me or not?"

"Of course I am not. I'll not give up such a home, and such a father and mother as I've got for the sake of living in a wilderness all my life."

"Well, you won't repeat what I have said to you, will you?"

"No, indeed; but you must promise me that you will give up that idea."

"All right, I will."

"You'll never speak of running away from home again, or even think of it?"

"No, I never will—honor bright."

"Then you may rely upon me to keep your secret. Now I have a plan to propose: Let's go fishing on the pier to-morrow—it's Saturday, you know—and talk the matter over. I can convince you in five minutes that you had better stay at home. Come over early—say five o'clock."

"I'll see what father says about it; good-night. I might have known better than to ask him to go with me," added Guy mentally, as he walked slowly toward the house. "If I had as pleasant a home as he has I wouldn't go either. Why don't my father and mother take some interest in me, and talk to me as Mr. and Mrs. Stewart talk to Hank? I haven't changed my mind, and I never shall. I promised that I would never again think of running away from home, but I did it just to keep Hank's mouth shut. As long as he thinks I have given up the idea, he won't say a word to anybody. He'll be astonished some fine morning, for I shall leave here as soon as I can scrape the money together. I wish I could find a pocket-book with a hundred dollars in it. I'd never return it to the owner, even if I found him. I must try Bob Walker now."

When Guy entered the sitting-room he found his father and mother waiting for him. The former handed him an open volume of Bancroft's History and Guy, seating himself, began reading the author's elaborate description of the passage of the Stamp Act and the manner in which it was received by the colonists—a

subject in which he was not in the least interested. His father often took him to task for his bad reading and pronunciation, but he managed to get through with the required twenty minutes at last, and with a great feeling of relief handed the book to his mother and moved his chair into one corner of the room. In forty minutes more the lesson was ended and Mr. Harris turned to question Guy on what had just been read. To his surprise and indignation he saw him sitting with his feet stretched out before him, his chin resting on his breast and his eyes closed. The boy was fast asleep.

"Guy!" Mr. Harris almost shouted.

"Sir!" replied his son, starting up quickly and rubbing his eyes.

"This is the way you give attention to what is going on, and repay the pains I am taking to teach you something, is it?" demanded his father. "Do you think ignorance is bliss? You don't know anything a boy of your age ought to know. Tell me how many distinct forms of government this country has passed through."

"I can't," replied Guy.

"Who was the third President of the United States?"

"I don't know."

"What were the names of the two men who were hanged in effigy by the Massachusetts colonists when the news of the passage of the Stamp Act was received?"

"I don't know," said Guy again.

"And yet that is just what we have been reading about to-night. I saw a picture in that paper you had in your possession a little while ago," continued Mr. Harris with suppressed fury. "It was a man dressed in furs, who stood leaning against a horse, holding a gun in one hand and stretching the other out toward a dog in front of him. Who was that man intended to represent?"

"Nick Whiffles," said Guy promptly.

"What was the name of his dog?"

"Calamity."

"Did his horse have a name?"

"Yes, sir—Firebug; and he called his rifle Humbug."

"There you have it!" exclaimed Mr. Harris with a sneer. "You know all about that, and you've no business to know it either, for it will do you more harm than good. If we had been reading that trash to-night you would have been wide awake and listening with all your ears; but because we were reading something worth knowing—something that would be of benefit to you in after life, if you would take the trouble to remember it—you must needs settle yourself and go to sleep. Now, then, draw up beside this table and read five pages in that history; and read them so carefully, too, that you can answer any question I may ask you about them to-morrow."

Guy, so sleepy that he could scarcely keep his eyes open, staggered to the chair pointed out to him and sat down, while his father once more picked up the evening paper and his mother resumed her needle.

When he had read the required number of pages and looked them over two or three times to fix the names and dates in his memory, he arose and put the book away in the library.

"Father," said he.

"Don't you know that it is very rude to interrupt a person who is reading?" replied Mr. Harris, looking up from his paper. "What do you want?"

"May I go fishing with Henry Stewart on the pier to-morrow?"

"No, sir, you may stay at home. A boy who behaves as you do deserves no privileges. I have learned that I cannot trust you out of my sight."

Knowing that it would not be safe to show any signs of anger or disappointment, Guy kept his face as straight as possible and turned to leave the room. But when he put his hand on the door-knob his father called to him.

"Guy," said he, "where are you going?"

"I am going to bed."

"And do you intend to leave us with that frown on your face and without bidding us good-night? One or the other of us might die before morning and then you would be sorry you parted from us in anger. I've a good mind to whip you soundly, for if ever a boy deserved it you do. Come back here and kiss your mother."

Almost ready to yell with rage, Guy returned and kissed his mother, who presented her cheek without raising her eyes from her novel, bid his father good-night, and this time succeeded in leaving the room without being called back.

When he was safe out of his father's sight he turned and shook his fist at him, at the same time muttering something between his clenched teeth that would have struck Mr. Harris motionless with horror could he have heard it. He went to bed with his heart full of hate, and not until his mind wandered off to other matters, and he begun to dream of the wild, free and glorious life he expected to lead in the mountains and on the prairies of the Far West, did he recover his usual spirits. He fell asleep while he was building his air-castles, and awoke to hear the breakfast bell ringing and to see the morning sun shining in at his window.

When he descended to the dining-room he was met by Ned, who was dressed in his best, and who informed him, with evident satisfaction, that Henry Stewart had been over to see if he was going fishing, and that his father had said that he couldn't go to the pier or do anything else he wanted to do until he had learned to behave himself. Ned added that he and his father and mother were going to ride out to visit Uncle David, who lived nine miles in the country, and that he, Guy, was to be left at home because there was no room in the buggy for him, and that he was not to stir one step outside the gate until their return.

"I'll show you whether I will or not," said Guy to himself. "It's a pretty piece of business, indeed, that I am to be shut up here at home while the rest of you go off on a visit. I won't stand it. I'll see as much fun

to-day as any of you, and if I only had all the money I need, you wouldn't find me here when you return."

Breakfast over, the buggy was brought to the door, and Mr. Harris, after assisting his wife and son to get in, turned to say a parting word to Guy.

He was to remain in the yard all day, bring no boys in there to play with him, and be very careful not to get into any mischief. If these commands were not obeyed to the very letter there would be a settlement between them when Mr. Harris came back.

Guy drew on a very long face as he listened to his father's words, meekly promised obedience and opened the gate for his father to drive out. He watched the buggy as long as it remained in sight and then, closing the gate, jumped up and knocked his heels together, danced a few steps of a hornpipe, and in various other ways testified to the satisfaction he felt at being left alone.

"I shouldn't feel sorry if I should never see them again," said he. "I am my own master to-day, and I am going to enjoy my liberty, too. But before I begin operations I must put Bertha and Jack on the wrong scent. They would blow on me in a minute."

Guy once more assumed a very sober expression of countenance, and walked into the kitchen where the servant-girl was at work.

"Bertha," said he, "I am going up to my curiosity shop, and I don't want to be disturbed. You needn't get dinner for me, for I sha'n't want any."

"I am glad of it," replied the girl, "I am going visiting myself to-day."

Guy strolled out to the carriage-house, and here he found Jack, the hostler and man-of-all-work, to whom he gave nearly the same instructions, adding the request that if any of his young friends called to see him, Jack would say to them that Guy had gone off somewhere, which, by the way, had Jack had occasion to tell it, would have been nothing but the truth.

The hostler promised compliance, and Guy, having

thus opened the way for the carrying out of the plans he had determined upon, went up to his curiosity shop, locking the door behind him, and putting the key into his pocket. He lumbered about the room for a while, making as much noise as he conveniently could, to let Bertha and Jack know that he was there, and then stepped to the window that overlooked the garden and peeped cautiously out. Having made sure that there was no one in sight, he crawled out of the window, feet first, and hanging by his hands, dropped to the ground. As soon as he touched it he broke into a run, and making his way across the garden, scaled a high board-fence, dropped into an alley on the opposite side, and in a few minutes more was two blocks away.

"There!" he exclaimed, as he slackened his pace and wiped his dripping forehead with his handkerchief; "that much is done, and no one is the wiser for it. Now, the first thing is to go down to Stillman's and buy a copy of the *Journal*. I wrote to the editors of that paper three weeks ago, telling them that I am going to be a hunter, and asking what sort of an outfit I shall need, and how much it will cost, and I ought to get an answer to-day.

"The second thing is to hunt up Bob Walker and feel his pulse. He once told me that he would run away and go to sea if his father ever laid a hand on him again, so I know I shall have easy work with him. He won't be as pleasant a companion, though, as Henry Stewart, for he swears, and is an awful overbearing, quarrelsome fellow. But I can't help it; I must have somebody with me."

A walk of a quarter of an hour brought Guy to Stillman's news-depot, where he stopped and purchased a copy of the paper of which he had spoken. Seeing a vacant chair in one corner of the store, he seated himself upon it, and with trembling hands unfolded the sheet, looking for the column containing the answers to correspondents. When he found it he ran his eye over it until it rested on the following paragraph:

"AN ABUSED DOG.—If you are going to become a hunter you will need an expensive outfit. A good rifle will cost from $25 to $75; a brace of revolvers, from $16 to $50; a hunting-knife, $1.25 to $3.50. Then you will need a hatchet or two, an abundance of ammunition, blankets, durable clothing, horse, etc., which, together with your fare by rail and steamer to St. Joseph, will cost you at least $200 more. We know of no hunter or trapper to whom we could recommend you, and neither can we say whether or not you will be able to find a wagon train that you could join. Now that we have answered your questions, we want to offer you a word of advice. Give up your wild idea, and never think of it again. As sure as you are a live boy, it will end in nothing but disappointment and misery. We are inclined to believe that the story of your grievances is greatly exaggerated; but even if it is not, you cannot better your condition by running away from home. Your parents have your welfare at heart, and if you are wise you will remain with them, even though their requirements do sometimes seem harsh and unnecessary. It may be that you will some day be left to fight your way through the world with no father or mother to advise or befriend you, and then you will find how hard it is. Take our word for it, if you live to be five years older, you will laugh at yourself whenever you reflect that you ever thought seriously of becoming a professional hunter."

Guy read this paragraph over twice, and then folded the paper and walked slowly out of the store.

CHAPTER V.

A SAIL ON THE LAKE.

IT IS beyond my power to describe Guy's feelings at that moment. He had never in his life been more grievously disappointed. It had never occurred to him that anybody who knew anything would discourage his project, much less the editors of his favorite journal, to whom he had made a full revelation of his circumstances and troubles. And then there was the expense, which greatly exceeded his calculations. That was the great drawback.

"Humph!" soliloquized Guy, after he had thought the matter over, "the man who wrote that article didn't know my father and mother. If he did, he wouldn't be so positive that everything they do is for the best. I know better, and won't give up my idea. I am determined to succeed. There are plenty of men who make a living and see any amount of sport by hunting and trapping, and why shouldn't I? Kit Carson is a real man and so is Captain Bridges. So is Adams, the great grizzly bear tamer. One of these days, when I am as famous as they are, I shall laugh to think I *did* become a professional hunter. But the money is what bothers me now. I shall need at least three hundred dollars. Great Cæsar! Where am I to get it? I've worked and scraped and saved for the last six months, and I've got just fifteen dollars. That isn't enough to buy a rifle. Where is the rest to come from? That's the question."

Guy walked along with his hands behind his back and his eyes fastened thoughtfully on the ground, revolving this problem in his mind. His prospects did not look

nearly so bright now as they did an hour ago. He was learning a lesson we all have to learn sooner or later, and that is that we cannot always have things as we want them in this world, and that the best laid schemes are often defeated by some unlooked-for event. Three hundred dollars! He never could earn that amount. His rags brought him but two cents a pound, and although he kept a sharp lookout and pounced upon every piece of cloth he found lying about the house, it sometimes took him a whole month to fill his bag, which held just five pounds. Old iron was worth only a cent a pound, and business in this line was beginning to get very dull, for he had not found a single horseshoe during the last two weeks, and he had purchased the last thing in the shape of broken frying-pans and battered kettles that any of his companions had to dispose of. He must find some other way to earn money. He had thought of carrying papers, which would add a dollar and a quarter a week to his income, besides what he would make out of his Carriers' Addresses on New Years. But Mr. Harris had vetoed that plan the moment it was proposed.

Guy did not know what to do next.

"Dear me, am I not in a fix?" he asked himself. "I read in the paper the other day of a boy picking up five thousand dollars that some banker dropped in the street. Why wasn't I lucky enough to find it? That banker might have whistled for his money when once I got my hands upon it. I *must* have three hundred dollars and I don't care how I get it."

Guy was gradually working himself into a very dangerous frame of mind. When one begins to talk to himself in this way it needs only the opportunity to make a thief of him. If Guy thought of this, he did not care, for he continued to reason thus, and was not at all alarmed when a daring project suddenly suggested itself to him. Twenty-four hours ago he would not have dared to ponder upon it; but now he allowed his thoughts to dwell upon it, and the longer he turned it

over in his mind the more firmly he became convinced that it was a splendid idea and that it could be successfully carried out. He wanted to get away by himself and look at the matter in all its bearings. With this object in view he turned down Erie Street and bent his steps toward Buck's boat-house, intending to spend an hour or two on the lake. In that time he believed he could make up his mind what was best to be done.

Arriving at the boat-house, Guy entered and accosted the proprietor, who stood behind his bar dispensing liquor and cigars to a party of excursionists who had just returned from a sail on the lake.

"Mr. Buck, is the Quail in?" asked Guy, giving the name of his favorite sail-boat.

"Yes, she is," replied a voice at his elbow; "but what do you want with her?"

Guy recognized the voice and turned to greet the speaker. He was a boy about his own age, who sat cross-legged in an arm-chair beside the door, his hat pushed on the side of his head rowdy fashion, one hand holding a copy of a sporting paper, and the other a lighted cigar, at which he was puffing industriously. His name was Robert Walker. He was a low-browed, black-haired fellow, and although by no means ill-looking, there was something in his face that would have told a stranger at the first glance that he was what is called a "hard customer." And his looks were a good index of his character and reputation. He was known as one of the worst boys in the neighborhood in which Guy lived. Parents cautioned their sons against associating with him, for he would fight, smoke, swear like any old sailor, and it was even whispered about among the boys belonging to the Brown Grammar School that he had been seen rather the worse for the beer he had drank. But Guy had always admired Bob; he was such a free and easy fellow! Besides, he knew so much that boys of his age have no business to know, that he was looked upon even by such youths as Henry Stewart as a sort of oracle. He and Guy represented two different

classes of boys—one having been spoiled by excessive indulgence, and the other by unreasonable severity.

Robert's father was Mr. Harris' cashier and book-keeper, and the two families would have been intimate had not Bob been in the way. The fathers and mothers visited frequently, but the boys never did; their parents always tried to keep them apart. But in spite of this they were often seen together on the streets, and a sort of friendship had sprung up between them. This was the boy Guy wanted for a companion on his runaway expedition, now that Henry Stewart had declined his invitation.

"The Quail is in," continued Bob, extending his hand to Guy, who shook it cordially, "but you are just a minute too late. Mr. Buck is going to get her out for me as soon as he is done serving these gentlemen. However, seeing it is you, I'll take you along, and we can divide the expenses between us."

"All right," replied Guy. "Do you know that you are just the fellow I want to see?"

"Anything particular?" asked Bob, knocking the ashes from his cigar.

"Yes, very particular."

"Well, that's curious. During the last week I have had something on my mind that I wanted to speak to you about—it's a secret, too, and one that I wouldn't mention to any fellow but you—but somehow I couldn't raise courage enough to broach the subject. We'll go out on the lake where we can say what we please without danger of being overheard. Let's take a drink before we go. Come on."

"I am obliged to you," answered Guy, "but I never drink."

"Take a cigar, then."

"No, I don't smoke."

"Nonsense. Be a man among men. Give me some beer, Mr. Buck. Take a glass of soda, Guy. That won't hurt you, and it is a temperance drink, too."

Guy leaned his elbows on the counter and thought

about it. This was a temptation that he had never been subjected to before. What would his father say if he yielded to it? But, on the whole, what difference did it make to him whether his father liked it or not? He was going away from home to be a hunter, and from what he had read he inferred that hunters did not refuse a glass when it was offered to them. If he was going among Romans, and expected to hold a high place among them, he must follow their customs. So he said he would take a bottle of soda, and when it was poured out for him he, not understanding the etiquette of the bar-room, watched Bob and followed his motions—bumped his glass on the counter, said "Here are my kindest regards," and drank it off.

"Now," said Bob, smacking his lips over his beer, "we're all ready. I've got half a dollar's worth of cigars in my pocket, and they will last us until we get back."

The boys followed Mr. Buck out of the house, and along a narrow wooden pier, on each side of which were moored a score or more of row and sail-boats of all sizes and models. When they reached the place where the Quail was lying they clambered down into her, Mr. Buck cast off the painter, and the little vessel moved away. Guy never forgot the hour he spent on the lake that day. A week afterward he would have given the world, had he possessed it, to be able to wipe it out or live it over again.

As the harbor was long and narrow and the wind unfavorable, considerable maneuvering was necessary, and for the first few minutes the attention of Guy and his companion was so fully occupied with the management of their craft that they could find no opportunity to begin the discussion of the subject uppermost in their minds. But when they rounded the light-house pier and found themselves fairly on the lake, Bob resigned the helm to Guy, and relighting his cigar, which he had allowed to go out, stretched himself on one of the thwarts, and intimated that he was ready to listen to what his friend had to say, adding:

"You may think it strange, but I believe I can tell you, before you begin, what you want to talk about."

"You can!" exclaimed Guy. "What makes you think so?"

"The way you act, and the pains you are taking to make money. Does your father know that you are a dealer in rags and old iron?"

"Of course not."

"I thought so. What do you want with the little money you are able to make in that way? You don't see any pleasure with it, for you never spend a cent. What are you going to do with that powder-horn you've got hung up in your curiosity shop? It is of no use to you, for your father won't allow you to own a gun. And then there's that lead bullet-ladle, rubber blanket, and cheese-knife. They are not worth the room they occupy as long as you stay here. But you are laying your plans to run away from home, young man—that's what you are up to. Indeed, you have almost as good as said so in my hearing two or three different times."

"Well, it's a fact, and there's no use in denying it," said Guy. "You won't blow on me?"

"Certainly not. That's just what I wanted to see about, for I am going to do the same thing myself."

"Are you? Give us your hand. We'll go together. I'm going to be a hunter."

"I know you are; I've heard you say so. I had some idea of becoming a sailor, but since I have thought the matter over I have made up my mind that your plan is the best. If one goes to sea he has to work whenever he is ordered, whether he feels likes it or not; but if he lives in the woods he is his own master, and can do as he pleases. Have you any definite plan in your head?"

"Yes. As soon as I get money enough. I am going to step aboard a propeller some dark night and go to Chicago. I can travel cheaper by water than I can by land, you know, and money is an object, I tell you. From Chicago I shall go to St. Joseph, purchase a horse

and whatever else I may need, join some wagon train that is going to California, and when I reach the mountains and find a place that suits me, I'll stop there and go to hunting."

"That's a splendid plan," said Bob with enthusiasm. "It is much better than going to sea. When do you intend to start?"

"Ah! that's just what I don't know. I find by a paper I bought this morning that I shall need at least three hundred dollars; and that's more than I can ever raise."

"By a paper you bought!" repeated Bob.

"Yes; there it is," said Guy, taking it from his pocket and tossing it toward his companion. "You see I wrote to the editors, telling them just how I am situated and what I intend to do, and they answered my letter this week. Look for 'An Abused Boy' in the correspondents' column, and you will see what they said."

After a little search Bob found the paragraph in question, and settled back on his elbow to read it.

When he finished, the opinion he expressed concerning it was the same Guy had formed when he first read it.

"It is rather discouraging, isn't it?" asked the latter.

"Not to me," answered Bob. "These editors don't know any more than anybody else. Why should they? In the first place the man who wrote this is not acquainted with our circumstances; and in the next, he is not so well posted on the price of some things as I am. He says a rifle will cost twenty-five dollars. Pat Smith has a cart-load of them, good ones, too, that you can buy for twelve dollars apiece."

"Is that so?" asked Guy.

"Yes; and after we get through with our sail we'll go around and look at them. He has hunting-knives, which he holds at a dollar and a quarter. I know, because I asked the price of them. Blankets are not worth more than five dollars per pair; and if you take

steerage passage on the steamer and a second-class ticket from Chicago you can go through to St. Joseph for twenty-five dollars. Then how are you going to spend the rest of your three hundred? Not for a horse, certainly; for I have heard father say that when he went to California in '49 he bought a very good mustang for thirty dollars. However," added Bob, "it will be well enough to have plenty of money, for we don't want to get strapped, you know."

"But where is it to come from?" asked Guy.

"I know. I have been thinking it over during the last week, and I know just how to go to work. Perhaps you won't like it, and if you don't you can go your way and I'll go mine. Here, smoke a cigar while I tell you about it."

"No, no! I can't smoke."

"What will you do when we are in the mountains? There'll be plenty of stormy days when we can't hunt or trap, and you'll need a pipe or cigar for company."

"It will be time enough for me to learn after I get to be a hunter."

"Perhaps it is just as well," returned Bob, after a moment's reflection. "If I carry out my plans you will have to help me, and you will need a clear head to do it. Listen now and I will tell you what they are."

Bob once more settled back on his elbow, and to Guy's intense amazement proceeded to unfold the details of the very scheme for raising funds which he himself had had in contemplation when he came to Mr. Buck's boat-house, and which Bob proposed should be put into execution at once, that very day.

Guy trembled with excitement and apprehension while he listened, and nothing but the coolness and confidence with which his companion spoke kept him from backing out. He had always imagined that the day for the carrying out of his wild idea was in the far future, and from a distance he could think of it calmly; but if Bob's plans were successful they would be miles and miles away ere the next morning's sun arose, and with the brand of *thief* upon their brows.

He begun to realize now what running away meant. He did not once think of his home—there was scarcely a pleasant reminiscence connected with it that he could recall—but now that the great world into which he had longed to throw himself seemed so near, he shrunk back afraid. This feeling quickly passed away.

The wild, free life of which he had so often dreamed seemed so bright and glorious, and his present manner of living seemed so dismal by contrast that, feeling as he did, he could not be long in choosing between them. He fell in with Bob's plans and caught not a little of his enthusiasm. He even marked out the part he was to play in the scene about to be enacted, making some suggestions and amendments that Bob was prompt to adopt.

The matter was all settled in half an hour later, and the Quail came about and stood toward the pier. When she landed and the boys entered the boat-house, Bob reminded Guy that it was his turn to stand treat. The latter was prompt to respond, and won a nod of approval from his companion by calling for a glass of beer.

Having settled their bill at the boat-house the boys started for the gunsmith's. There they spent twenty minutes in looking at the various weapons and accouterments they thought they might need during their career in the mountains, and Bob excited the astonishment of his friend by selecting a couple of rifles, as many hunting-knives, powder-horns, bullet-pouches and revolvers, and requesting the gunsmith, with whom he seemed to be well acquainted, to put them aside for him, promising to call in an hour and pay for them.

"Isn't that carrying things a little too far?" asked Guy when they were once more on the street. "What if we should slip up in our arrangements?"

"But I don't intend to slip up," returned Bob confidently. "There's no need of it. Why, Guy, what makes your face so pale?"

"I feel nervous," replied the latter honestly.

"Now don't go to giving away to such feelings, for if you do you will spoil everything. Remember that our success depends entirely upon you. If I fail in doing my part the fault will be yours. But I must leave you here, for it won't be safe for us to be seen together. If you are going to back out do it now before it is too late."

"I'm not going to do anything of the kind. I'll stick to you through thick and thin."

"All right. Remember now that when the South Church clock strikes one I will be on the corner above your father's store, and shall expect to find you there all ready to start.

"You may depend upon me," replied Guy. "I'll be there if I live."

The two boys separated and moved away in nearly opposite directions, their feelings being as widely different as the courses they were pursuing. Bob, cool and careless, walked off whistling, stopping now and then to exchange a pleasant nod with an acquaintance, while Guy was as pale as a sheet and trembled in every limb. It seemed to him that every one he met looked sharply at him, and with an expression which seemed to say his secret was known. He felt like a criminal; and actuated by a desire to get out of sight of everybody, and that as speedily as possible, he broke into a run, and in a few minutes reached his home.

CHAPTER VI.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

ALKING rapidly along the alley that ran behind his father's garden Guy climbed the fence, dropped down into a thicket of bushes, and stopped to take a survey of the premises. There was no one in sight, and having fully satisfied himself on this point he crept stealthily into the carriage-house and up the stairs to his curiosity shop. Locking the door behind him he took down from one of the nails a dilapidated valise, which he had provided for this very occasion, and throwing open his tool-chest began bundling his valuables into it with eager haste. He did not forget anything, not even the rubber blanket, powder-horn, or rusty butcher-knife. When the last article had been crowded into the valise he closed it, and carrying it to the window that overlooked the garden dropped it to the ground. Then he locked the door of the curiosity shop, descended the stairs, and picking up the valise carried it to the lower end of the garden and concealed it under a quince tree.

This much was done, but he had still another piece of work to perform, and that took him into the house. He went to his mother's room, and after considerable fumbling in one of the bureau drawers took out something wrapped up in a white paper, which, after he had examined it to make sure that he had found what he wanted, he put it into his pocket. Next he hurried to his own room to secure the buckskin purse containing the fifteen dollars he had with so much difficulty scraped together. This done, he selected from his abundant wardrobe a pair of heavy boots, a shirt or two,

a change of linen, a few pairs of stockings, and a suit of his roughest and most durable clothing, all of which he tied up in a handkerchief he had spread upon the floor. Once during this operation he paused and looked with rather a longing eye toward the pair of patent-leathers and the natty broadcloth suit he was accustomed to wear on extra occasions, but, after a little reflection, he decided to leave them behind, consoling himself with the thought that in the country to which he was going buckskin was oftener seen than broadcloth, and that fine boots and expensive clothing would not look well on the person of a trapper.

Having tied his bundle he caught it up and ran out of the house. His previous examination of the premises had satisfied him that the coast was clear, so he did not take any pains to conceal his movements. He went directly to the place where he had concealed his valise and spent ten minutes trying to crowd some of the clothing into it; but it was already so full that there was not room even for a pair of stockings, and Guy found that he must either carry his bundle through the streets wrapped up in his handkerchief or leave it behind. He decided on the former course. Even trappers must have clothes, and he feared that those he was then wearing might not hold together until he could capture and cure a sufficient number of deer hides to make him a suit of buckskin.

Taking the valise in his left hand, and the bundle in his teeth, Guy mounted to the top of the fence, and was on the very point of swinging himself over, when happening to cast his eyes up the lane, whom should he see approaching but Henry Stewart. He had come up just in time to catch him in the act of running away from home.

So thought Guy, as he stood leaning on the top of the fence, growing pale and red by turns, and utterly at a loss what to do. He was well aware that the quick-witted Henry would know in a minute what was going on; he could not well help it if he made any use of his

eyes, for there was the evidence of Guy's guilt in the shape of his valise and bundle in plain sight. What would Henry think of him for breaking the solemn promise he had made the evening before—and more than that, what would he *do?* But, unfortunately for our hero, Henry not being as wide-awake as he usually was, did not see him. I say unfortunately, because had Henry received the least intimation of what was going on, he would have saved his friend many an hour of misery and remorse. He walked along, whistling merrily, as though he felt at peace with himself and all the world, carrying in one hand his jointed fish-pole, stowed away in a neat bag of drilling, and in the other a fine string of rock bass; and so completely was his mind occupied with thoughts of the splendid sport he had enjoyed on the pier that he had neither eyes nor ears for what was going on near him.

Guy saw that he had a chance to save himself, and he lost not an instant in taking advantage of it. As quick as a flash he dropped his burdens behind the fence, and in a moment more would have been out of sight himself had not the noise the heavy valise made in falling through the branches of a quince tree in the garden aroused Henry from his reverie. He looked up just in time to see Guy's head disappearing behind the fence.

"Aha!" he exclaimed, "I saw you, old fellow. What are you about there?"

Guy, finding that he was discovered, straightened up and looked over the top of the fence again. "Halloo, Hank," said he, with an attempt to appear as cordial and friendly as usual.

"What's going on in here?" asked Henry, walking up close to the fence and peeping through one of the cracks. "I heard something drop."

"It was my ball club," replied Guy, who could swallow a lie as easily as if it had been a strawberry. "I was about to toss it toward you to attract your attention, when it slipped out of my hand."

"Oh," said Henry. "But what's the matter with

you? Your face is as white as a sheet. Are you ill?"

"No, only mad because father wouldn't let me go fishing this morning. I wish you would pass on and attend to your business," added Guy mentally. "I am in an awful hurry."

"I am sorry you couldn't go, for we had the best of sport," said Henry. Then he exhibited his string of fish, and went on to tell who were on the pier, and what success each one had met with—how he had struck a splendid black bass, and after an exciting struggle had almost landed him, when his line broke and the fish took himself off; how Charley Root, one of their schoolmates, hooked on to a yellow pike that he ought to have lost, he handled him so awkwardly, but which, by the united efforts of all the men and boys on the pier, was safely landed at last, and when placed on the scales pulled down the beam at nine pounds and a quarter—of all of which Guy scarcely heard a dozen words, although under any other circumstances he would have listened with all his ears.

"As you must be lonely, I'll come in and visit with you a while," added Henry.

"I wish you could," answered Guy, "but father told me before he went away to bring no one in the yard."

"Then suppose you come over and see me."

"I can't. I have orders not to go outside the gate to-day."

"Have you finished reading the 'Boy Trappers?' If you have, I'll lend you another book."

"No, I am not yet done with it. Perhaps I will spend an hour or two with you this evening, after the folks come home."

"I wish you would. You know we want to talk about something. Good-by."

"Farewell—a long farewell," said Guy to himself as his friend moved away. "You'll never see me again or the 'Boy Trappers' either, for I've got it safely stowed away in my valise. I need it more than you do, and

you've so many you won't miss it. But didn't I come near being caught, though?" he added, drawing a long breath as he thought of his very narrow escape. "In half a second more I'd have been over the fence and into a scrape that I could not possibly have lied out of. But what's the odds? A miss is as good as a mile."

Guy remained standing on the fence for ten minutes —long enough to allow Henry time to reach home and go into the house—and then jumped down into the garden after his valise and bundle. This time he succeeded in scaling the fence without being seen by anybody, and with a few rapid steps reached the corner of the block, where he stopped to take a last look at his home. He ran his eye quickly over its familiar surroundings, and without a single feeling of regret turned his back upon it and hurried away. A walk of fifteen minutes brought him to the corner above his father's store, where he found Bob waiting for him. The latter had a well-filled valise in his hand, and was as cool and careless as ever. He peered sharply into Guy's face as he came up and seemed satisfied with what he saw there.

"You look better than you did the last time I saw you," said he. "Have you got it?"

Guy replied in the affirmative.

"Father hasn't left the store yet," continued Bob, "so we'll have plenty of time to go down to the dock and engage passage on a propeller. The Queen of the Lakes sails to-night, and we'll go on her."

"All right," said Guy with a show of eagerness he was very far from feeling.

"We'll have to leave our luggage somewhere, for when we get our guns and other things we'll have as much as we can carry, and we might as well leave it on board the steamer as anywhere else. We mus'n't be seen together with these valises in our hands, or somebody will suspect something, so you had better go back and go down Elm Street and I'll go down Ninth. We'll meet at the foot of Portage Street, where the Queen of the Lakes lies."

The two boys separated and pursued their different routes toward the dock. Guy reached it ten minutes in advance of his companion, and the first vessel he saw was the propeller of which he was in search. Her name was painted in large letters on her bow, and over her rail was suspended a card bearing the words, "This steamer for Chicago to-night." Her crew were engaged in rolling barrels and hogsheads up the gang-planks, and Guy, watching his opportunity, dodged in and ascended the stairs that led to the cabin.

"Now, then," exclaimed a flashily-dressed young man, who met him at the top and looked rather suspiciously at the bundles Guy deposited on the floor of the cabin, "what can I do for you?"

"Are you the steward?" asked the boy.

"I have the honor."

"I want to go to Chicago on this boat."

"Who are you, where do you live, and what is your name?" demanded the steward with another sidelong glance at Guy's luggage.

The boy noticed the look, and took his cue from it.

"My name is John Thomas," said he, "and I used to live in Syracuse, but I am going West now to find my uncle."

"Where does your father live, and what business does he follow?"

"I haven't got any father or mother either. I am alone in the world."

The man's face softened instantly. The next words he uttered were spoken in a much kinder tone.

"The fare will be eight dollars," said he.

"I had thought of taking steerage passage," returned Guy. "Money is not as plenty with me as it is with some folks."

"Then you can go for five dollars. Step this way."

Guy picked up his valise and bundle and followed the steward, who led the way along the deck toward the forward part of the vessel, finally turning into an apartment which looked very unlike the neatly furnished

cabin they had just left. The floor was destitute of a carpet, and the rough bunks that were fitted up against the bulk-heads looked anything but inviting. Chests, bundles, and bed-clothes were scattered about, and in one corner were congregated a dozen or more persons of both sexes, who were eating bread and bologna and talking loudly.

Guy looked askance at them, and more than half made up his mind that he wouldn't take passage in the steerage. He didn't like the idea of being obliged to keep such company for a journey of seven hundred miles.

"You may take this bunk," said the steward, pointing out the one he wished Guy to occupy.

"Where are the bed-clothes?" asked the boy.

"We don't furnish them to steerage passengers. Every man finds his own."

"But I haven't got any," said Guy, "and I can't sleep on those hard boards. I think I had better wait a while. I have a friend, Ned Wheeler, who is going with me, and perhaps he will decide to take a cabin passage."

The steward, not deeming any reply necessary, turned on his heel and walked out, leaving Guy alone with the emigrants. He did not know that it would be quite safe to leave his luggage there with no one to watch it, but after a little hesitation he decided to run the risk; and, pitching his valise and bundle into the bunk the steward had pointed out to him, he hurried below to watch for his expected companion. He wanted to post him. In a few minutes Bob made his appearance.

"Look here," said Guy, as he ran to meet him, "your name isn't Bob Walker any longer—at least while we remain on board this propeller."

"I understand," said Bob. "Let me see; I'll call myself——"

"I have told the steward that your name is Ned Wheeler, and that my name is John Thomas."

"It seems to me that you might have found better ones if you had tried."

"No matter; they will answer our purpose as well as any others. You see our names will have to go into the passenger list, and if our fathers should suspect that we have gone up the lakes, they would have no difficulty in tracing us as far as Chicago, if we gave our true names."

"I understand," said Bob again. "Have you picked out a berth yet?"

"No; but I have seen the steerage, and it is a horrible-looking place. Come on; I'll show it to you."

Bob was not very favorably impressed with the appearance of things in the steerage. He looked at the dingy deck, the empty bunks, the ragged, dirty group in the corner, and stepped back and shook his head.

"I can't go this, Guy," said he. "I have been used to better things. Get your bundles, and we'll take cabin passage. We shall have money enough to pay for it."

The steward being hunted up, showed the boys to a state-room in the cabin, in which they deposited their luggage, after which they hurried ashore to carry out their plans.

Now came the hardest part of the work, and Guy would have been glad to shirk it, could it have been accomplished without his assistance.

It was dangerous as well as difficult, and there was dishonor connected with it. More than that—and this was what troubled Guy the most—there was a possibility that the crime they intended to commit, even if they were successful in it, would be discovered before they could leave the city, and then what would become of them?

While Guy was thinking about it, they arrived within sight of his father's dry-goods store.

"Now, then," said Bob, giving him an encouraging slap on the back, "keep a stiff upper lip, and remember that everything depends upon you. Do your part faithfully, and I'll do mine."

With a beating heart Guy walked into the store, and, stopping before the counter, drew a small package from

his pocket. He tried to look unconcerned, but he trembled violently, and his face was white with excitement and apprehension.

The clerk who stepped up to attend to his wants stared at him in astonishment.

"What's the matter, Guy?" he inquired.

"Nothing—nothing whatever, Mr. Fellows. What made you ask?"

"Why, you look as though you had been sick for a week. And see how your hand shakes."

"Well, I don't feel remarkably lively for some cause or other, that's a fact," returned Guy. "Mother sent me down here to see if you could match this piece of silk," he continued, unfolding the package and displaying its contents.

"No, I cannot," answered the clerk, and Guy knew very well what he was going to say before the words left his lips. "I told Mrs. Harris the last time she was in that our new stock would not arrive before Monday."

"Mother is in a great hurry and can't wait a day longer. Can't you send out to some other store?"

"Certainly," said the clerk, taking a pair of scissors from his pocket and cutting the silk in twain. "Here, Thompson, take this up to Kenton's and see if they can match it; and, Jones, you take this piece and go over to Sherman's."

When Guy had seen the two clerks depart on their errand he drew a long breath of relief. A part of his work was accomplished, and it had been, too, just as he and Bob had planned it. The next thing was to keep Mr. Fellows employed in the front part of the store for a few minutes longer.

"Won't you be kind enough to look over your stock again?" said Guy. "Mother is positive there is a remnant of that silk somewhere in the store."

"I'll do it, of course, to please her," replied the clerk, "but I know I sha'n't find it. Ah! Here's Mr. Walker. Perhaps he knows something about it."

At the mention of that name Guy started as if he had

been shot. Bob's father was the very man of all others he did not want to see just then, for he belonged in the back of the store, and Bob was there. Guy had a presentiment that something disagreeable was about to happen.

CHAPTER VII.

ADRIFT IN THE WORLD.

HY, GUY, what's the matter with you?" asked Mr. Walker, giving the boy's hand a cordial grip and shake. "Been sick?"

"No, sir," stammered Guy.

"Then you're going to be. I never saw you look so pale before. What was it you said to me?" added Mr. Walker, addressing himself to the clerk.

"Mrs. Harris has sent down that piece of silk again," answered Mr. Fellows. "Can we match it?"

"No; and there's not a piece like it in the city," said Mr. Walker. "But we'll have some on Monday sure, for I ordered——"

The gentleman suddenly paused, and looking sharply toward the back part of the store, bent forward in a listening attitude.

Guy listened also, and was almost ready to drop with terror when he distinctly heard a faint, grating noise like that which would be made by turning a key carefully in a lock. It seemed to come from behind the high desk which fenced off the office from the main part of the store.

Mr. Walker stood for an instant as if profoundly astonished, and, with an inquiring glance at the clerk, started on tiptoe toward the office. Mr. Fellows was close at his heels, and Guy, impelled by a curiosity that he could not have resisted if he had tried, brought up the rear. He saw Mr. Walker disappear behind the high desk, and jumping upon a chair and looking over it, he had a full view of the scene that transpired on the other side.

Bob was kneeling in front of an open safe, and was in the very act of crowding a large package of money into

his pocket. So intent was he upon what he was doing, that he did not hear his father's stealthy approach.

Mr. Walker was utterly confounded. Hardly able to believe the evidence of his eyes, he stood for a moment as if deprived of all power of action; then springing forward with a quick bound, he wrenched the package from his son's grasp, and sunk helpless and almost breathless into the nearest chair.

"Oh, Robert! Robert!" he exclaimed, while the tears he could not repress coursed down his cheeks. "Is this the way you repay my kindness and indulgence? How could you do it! How could you do it!"

A death-like silence followed. Mr. Walker leaned his head upon his hands and shook like a man with the ague. Bob, having recovered his perpendicular—for his father, in his excitement, had thrown him headlong into the nearest corner—stood sullen and motionless. The clerk rubbed his eyes, and looked from one to the other in silent amazement; and Guy, stunned and bewildered, staggered off the chair, and walking like one in a dream, moved slowly out of the store and down the street. He did not know where he was going, and what was more he did not care. When he came to himself he was standing in the upper story of an elevator, gazing in a stupid, benumbed sort of way at the monster wheel as it slowly revolved, bringing up an endless chain of loaded buckets from some dark abyss beneath him. He was able now to think over the incident that had just happened at the store, and as he was not yet fully hardened, he felt his situation most keenly.

"It is all over with me now," said he, with a calmness that surprised himself, "for of course the part I have played in this miserable business will be known when the folks come home, even if it isn't known already. Mother will say that she didn't send me down there to match that piece of silk, and in that way my guilt will be exposed. Besides, Bob is cornered, and I know him too well to indulge in the hope that he will take all the blame upon himself and shield me. I can't stay here,

for I am forever disgraced. I *must* go, and with only fifteen dollars in my pocket, too. Now that I think of it, I am glad Bob didn't succeed in stealing that package. I shall at least have the satisfaction of knowing that what little money I have, I have earned honestly."

How Guy managed to exist during that long afternoon was a mystery to himself. He wanted to keep out of sight of everybody, and the loft of the elevator was as good a place of concealment as he could have found. No one intruded upon him during the five hours he spent there. He passed a portion of his time in walking about with his hands in his pockets, thinking over his situation and wondering what should be his first move now that he was fairly adrift in the world, and the remainder in standing at the front window watching the crew of the Queen of the Lakes, who were still busily engaged in loading their vessel.

During the afternoon several passengers arrived, some on foot and some in carriages, and Guy always held his breath in suspense while he sharply scrutinized the face of every one who ascended the gang-plank, and was as often greatly relieved to find that there were none among them he had ever seen before.

At length, to his great joy, he discovered a thin cloud of smoke, which grew thicker and blacker every moment, ascending from the propeller's chimney.

The men who were loading the vessel became quicker in their movements and rolled the freight along at a more rapid rate, encouraged by the voices and gestures of the mates.

Finally one of the planks was drawn in and the after gangway closed, and just as it begun to grow dark two of the four lines that held the steamer to the wharf were cast off and the whistle was blown.

Guy now had another disagreeable piece of business to perform, and that was to transfer himself from the loft of the elevator to the deck of the propeller.

Drawing in a long breath and calling all his courage

to his aid he ran swiftly down the stairs, paused a moment at the door and then bounded across the wharf and up the gang-plank. He went directly to the upper deck, and seating himself upon the rail over the gangway, looked closely at every one who came on board the propeller, intending, if he saw Mr. Walker or any of his father's clerks approaching, to beat a hasty retreat. But all Mr. Harris' employes were doing just what Guy ought to have been doing—attending to their business. Had they known where he was and what he was about to do, it is probable that some of them would have interested themselves in the matter; but as they did not, Guy was left to his own devices.

At last, to the boy's intense relief, everything was made ready for the start. The whistle shrieked again, the captain took his stand upon the wheel-house, the lines were handed aboard, and the Queen of the Lakes moved slowly down the harbor.

As soon as clear water was seen between the boat and the wharf Guy told himself that he was safe from pursuit, and settling into a comfortable position on the rail, he prepared to take a last look at the city of Norwall.

As it was already dark he could not see much of it except the lights. These faded out of his sight one by one, and finally when the steamer, after passing the breakwater and the light-house swung around and headed up the lake, they were all shut out from his view.

Then Guy begun to feel lonely and chilly, too, for a keen, cutting wind was blowing and he had no overcoat. As he arose to his feet, intending to go into the cabin where it was warmer, some one suddenly laid a hand upon his shoulder.

Guy started violently, and so surprised and frightened was he that he lost his balance, and would certainly have fallen overboard had not the hand been quickly shifted from his shoulder to his arm, griping it with sufficient force and strength to haul him on board and enable him to recover his equilibrium. As soon as he was fairly on his feet he looked up and was astonished beyond meas-

ure to find himself confronted by Bob Walker, who was comfortably wrapped up in an overcoat, held a lighted cigar in his teeth, and wore his hat on one side in the same old rowdy style. He did not look much like a boy who had been caught in the act of robbing a safe.

"Why, Guy," said he with a laugh, "you are as nervous as an old woman. You must get over that before you reach the mountains, or Kit Carson and Captain Bridges will never have a rival in you. Did you think I was a policeman?"

"Bob," exclaimed Guy gleefully, "you don't know how glad I am to see you. I little expected to find you here."

"What did you think I would do?" demanded Bob. "You didn't imagine that I would stay in Norwall after being caught in such a scrape, did you? I am not quite so green. I tell you, Guy, if father had stayed away just five minutes longer we'd have been rich. That package I held in my hand had five hundred dollars in it."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Guy, catching his breath.

"It's a fact. The amount was marked on the wrapper."

"What did your father say to you?"

"He told me to go home, and I did; but I didn't stay there long. I got my overcoat and came back to the boat. I've been on board ever since two o'clock waiting for you."

"And I was hiding in the elevator all the while. But, Bob, do you know I am glad that you didn't get out of the store with that money? It is bad enough to run away from home; it would be worse if we were thieves!"

"Bah!" exclaimed Bob contemptuously, "you're losing courage already, and you'd better not, for you will have need of all you can muster before we get through with this business. We've got to earn money now to buy an outfit, and how are we going to do it? But let's go into the cabin. It's cold out here."

Bob strutted off with as much dignity as if he had

been the owner of the vessel, and Guy slowly followed. The cabin was a blaze of light, and most of the passengers had congregated there to escape from the cold wind that was blowing. They sat around in little groups, some reading, others conversing with their friends, and everybody seemed to be happy except Guy. He was indeed losing courage; and if he could have blotted out the events of that afternoon, he would have given everything he ever hoped to possess to have been safe under his father's roof again. He had not yet got fairly out into the "wide, wide world," of which he had so often dreamed, had encountered none of its trials and vicissitudes, and yet he knew as well as though he had already tried it, that the struggle he was about to commence would prove too much for him. The longer he thought about it the more nervous and uneasy he became, until at last he could not sit still, or bear to remain in the cabin. The air seemed hot and almost stifling, and the merriment of the passengers grated harshly on his ears. Arising to his feet he made his way to the deck, and for four long hours paced back and forth, all unmindful of the wind and the big drops of rain that now and then dashed into his face.

At last, overcome with fatigue and excitement, he sought his state-room. Bob had already turned in, and was snugly tucked away in the lower bunk. He appeared to be asleep, for his eyes were closed and he breathed heavily.

Guy hastily divested himself of his damp garments, and hanging them upon the hooks that were screwed into the bulk-head, climbed into his bunk and was soon in a deep slumber. He was aroused once during the night by some one moving about the room; but it was only Bob, who, in reply to an inquiry from Guy, said that he had been on deck to see how things were going, and that it was raining buckets and blowing great guns. Guy quickly went off into the land of dreams again, lulled by the rocking of the vessel, but about daylight was awakened by the pangs of seasickness.

All that forenoon he suffered greatly, and was a most forlorn-looking object indeed. Bob, who was as lively as a cricket, faithfully attended to all his wants, and shortly after dinner brought him a lemon and a piece of toast. When he had taken a little of the juice of the former, and a few mouthfuls of the latter, he felt better, and was able, with Bob's help, to put on his clothes and go on deck. While the two boys were conversing and watching the white-caps as they rolled toward them, the steward approached, and addressing himself to Guy, said:

"Please walk up to the clerk's office."

"To pay your fare, you know," added Bob, seeing that Guy did not quite understand. "I settled mine this morning."

"Oh, yes. I have been so sick that I forgot all about that. Lend me your arm, please. I haven't yet got my sea legs on."

Bob complied, and in a few minutes the two boys were standing before the clerk, who drew the book containing the passenger list toward him, and asked, as he held his pen poised in the air:

"What name?"

"Guy—John Thomas," replied the seasick runaway, who would have given his true name had not Bob pinched his arm just in time to prevent it.

Guy John Thomas," repeated the clerk, as he entered the name in his book. "Where to?"

"Chicago."

"Eight dollars."

Guy thrust his hand into the pocket of his trousers, and a look of blank amazement suddenly overspread his pale face. The pocket was empty. He felt in the other, and finally searched everywhere about his clothes, but nothing in the shape of a purse could be found.

"My gracious!" gasped Guy.

"What's the matter?" asked his companion.

"Matter!" Guy almost shouted; "matter enough. I've lost my pocket-book."

"No!" exclaimed Bob, looking surprised.

"But I say *yes!*" shrieked Guy; "and with it I have lost every cent I had in the world. Oh! what shall I do?"

"It can't be possible," said Bob, feeling of his friend's pockets. "Look again."

"Oh, haven't I looked everywhere already?" demanded Guy, the tears starting to his eyes as he begun another thorough examination of his clothing. "It's lost, I tell you."

"Perhaps you left it in your valise. Let's go and look."

"No, I didn't. I put it in my pocket yesterday, and I didn't once take it out. Oh, dear! oh, dear!"

The clerk laid down his pen, leaned his elbows on the desk before him, and waited to see what Guy was going to do about it, and the latter, having satisfied himself that the money was not to be found about his person, allowed Bob to lead him off to his state-room. With frantic haste he overhauled the bundle and tumbled the contents of his valise upon the floor, but no purse rewarded his search. Then he looked under his pillow, and into every corner in the room, but with no better success.

"It's no use; it's gone," screamed Guy, throwing himself upon Bob's bunk and giving away to a torrent of tears, "and here I am without a copper in my pocket, and no friend to help me! I can't go back home, and I don't know what to do. I wish I was dead. Have you got any money, Bob?"

"Not a dollar; not even half a dollar. I had just enough to pay my fare, and expected to look to you for a few dimes. We're in a fix, that's certain. When we reach Chicago we shall be strapped as flat as pancakes, and in a strange city, too. I'll go and speak to the skipper. Perhaps he can do something for you."

Bob easily found the captain, who listened patiently while he stated his friend's case, and accompanied him to the presence of Guy, to whom he propounded a few inquiries: Had he any idea where he lost his money?

Might he not have dropped it or had his pocket picked before he came on board the propeller. Had he seen any stranger in his room the night before? and had he any relatives or friends in Chicago? To all these questions Guy replied in the negative. The captain looked thoughtfully at the floor for a moment, said it was a hard case, but he didn't see that he could do anything, and turning on his heel he left the room, while Bob seated himself on the edge of his bunk, and looked at his friend with a very sympathizing expression on his countenance.

A dozen times that afternoon Guy searched all his pockets, examined the contents of his valise and bundle, and peeped into every part of the state-room, hoping that in his hurry and excitement he had overlooked the purse, and that it would yet come to light; but he as often abandoned the search in utter despair, and threw himself upon the bunk to indulge in a fresh burst of tears. Bob lent willing assistance, and tried to utter words of consolation, but these did not help Guy. He did not want sympathy, but money.

About four o'clock the door opened, admitting the steward.

"Have you found it yet?" he asked.

"No," sobbed Guy, "and I never shall."

"Did you lose all you had?"

"Every red cent."

"Then, of course, you can't pay your fare to Chicago. I have been talking to the captain about you, and he says you must go ashore the first landing we make, which will be at Saginaw. In the meantime you will have to give up this room and go into the steerage. You will find an empty bunk there."

"Oh, I haven't got any bed-clothes, and how am I to sleep on those hard boards?" exclaimed Guy.

"I don't know I am sure. But you will have it to do, if you sleep at all. We have three or four passengers who slept on chairs in the cabin last night, and I must put one of them in here."

Guy covered his face with his hands and cried lustily.

"Come, come! Shoulder your dunnage and clear out! I am in a hurry," said the steward sharply.

Guy saw that he had no alternative. Slowly arising from his bunk he picked up his valise, while Bob took his bundle, and together they went their way to the steerage. It looked ten-fold more dingy and forbidding now than it did when Guy first saw it. He did not think he could live there, and told Bob so.

"Nonsense!" said his companion. "You will live in worse places than this before you see the Rocky Mountains. But I'd be a man if I were you, Guy. Choke down your tears."

"Oh, yes; it's all well enough for you to talk, for you've nothing to trouble you. Your passage is paid and you've a nice room to sleep in. But you won't go to Chicago, will you?"

"Why not?"

"And leave me alone?"

"I don't see that I can help it. I have paid my passage, and I might as well go on."

"But, Bob, what shall I do without you?"

"A fellow can't live in this world without money, Guy, and if I go ashore in the woods how am I going to earn any?"

"How am *I* going to earn any?" retorted Guy with more pluck and independence than he had yet exhibited. "But I see what you are at very plainly. You want to go back on me."

"No, I don't."

"Yes, you do; and I don't care either. If you want to desert me while I am in trouble, do it. I don't ask any odds of you. All I want you to do is to keep away from me from this time forward. Don't speak to me, or even look at me. But bear one thing in mind—we must both struggle for an existence now, and I'll come to the top of the heap first."

As Guy said this he snatched the bundle from Bob's hand, pitched it, with the valise, into one of the empty bunks, and turning square about left the steerage.

CHAPTER VIII.

GUY FINDS A FRIEND.

POOR GUY! his misfortunes were following close upon the heels of one another. He had looked upon the loss of his money as the greatest of calamities, but now a worse had befallen him. He was at swords' points with Bob Walker, and he did not see how he could get on without him. Bob was so self-reliant, and could so easily adapt himself to circumstances that Guy had already learned to lean upon him. Fully sensible of his own lack of courage and independence, he wanted somebody to advise and sympathize with him. Longing to get away by himself where he could brood over his sorrows to his heart's content, he hurried out of the steerage, and was making his way aft, when he ran plump into the arms of some one. It was the steward.

"Ah! this will never do," said the officer. "Steerage passengers are not allowed abaft the waist."

"Eh?" exclaimed Guy.

"Come here," said the steward, "and I will explain what I mean. Do you see this gangway that runs athwartships? Well, you mustn't come any nearer the stern than that. Go for'ard now."

Guy started in obedience to his command, and just then the supper-bell rung. The first to answer the summons was Bob Walker, who went into the wash-room and tucked up his sleeves preparatory to performing his ablutions. Guy went in also, and followed his movements.

Having recovered from his seasickness by this time, he was, of course, very hungry, and the savory odors

that came from the cabin every time the door was opened served to quicken his appetite. He hung up his cap, and was about to turn on the water, when the ubiquitous steward once more appeared.

"Now, pard, this won't do, either," said he, taking hold of the boy's arm and waving his hand toward the door.

"Why not?" demanded Guy, trying to throw off the steward's grasp. "I want to wash before supper, don't I?"

"If you do you will find plenty of buckets on the main deck."

"I am not in the habit of washing in buckets, and I sha'n't do it," replied Guy, greatly astonished.

"Oh, that's the way the wind sets, is it?" exclaimed the steward, changing his tone and manner in an instant. "You're standing on your dignity, are you, you dead beat? Now mark you," he added, shaking his finger in the boy's face, "if I catch you as far aft as this gangway again I'll walk you for'ard by the nape of the neck. Now get out o' this! Out you go, with a jump."

Guy did not go with a jump exactly, but he went with a very strong push, for the steward, exerting all his strength, flung him headlong through the door, and kicked his cap after him. Bob stood by, wiping his hands, and, as Guy made his hasty exit, he chuckled audibly, and gave the steward an approving wink.

When he went into the cabin to supper he jingled some silver in his pocket, and shook his head in a very wise and knowing manner.

"You'll come out at the top of the heap before I do, will you?" he soliloquized. "It looks like it now, does it not? You're not sharp enough to make your way in this wicked world, my innocent young friend. I was as poor as you were yesterday morning, and now I've got forty dollars to help me along. A fig for such fellows as you! I am better off without you."

Guy, filled with rage and grief, picked up his cap and made his way forward. He fully realized now what it

was to be adrift in the world. With no money in his pocket, no friend to whom he could go for advice or assistance, and with the prospect before him of being put off the boat in a strange place and among strange people, his situation was indeed a trying one.

He glanced into the steerage as he walked by the door, but could not make up his mind to enter. It looked gloomy in there, and the occupants stared at him so rudely that he hurried on, anxious to get out of their sight.

"A man is no man unless he has money in his pocket," said the runaway to himself. "Everybody is down on me now, because I am broke. It beats me where that purse could have gone so suddenly. I know it was in my pocket last night when I hung up my clothes, for I heard it strike against the bulk-head. If it were not for that safe scrape I'd work my way home on some vessel, take the whipping I know I'd get, and settle down with the determination to behave myself. But I shall never see home again, for I shall starve to death. I brought no provisions with me, and I can't raise the money to buy a seat at the second table. I sha'n't get a bite to eat until I reach Saginaw, and then I shall have to beg it."

A bright prospect this for the boy who had so confidently expected to find nothing but fair weather and plain sailing before him! Instead of leaving all his troubles at home, he was running into others that he had never dreamed of.

"Here you are!" exclaimed a cheery voice at his elbow. "Come in and take a bite with us."

Guy, who had been walking along with his eyes fastened thoughtfully on the deck, looked up and found himself in front of an open door that led into the quarters occupied by the crew of the propeller, who were engaged in eating their supper. In one corner of the room was a huge mess-chest, which did duty as a table, and the sailors sat around it, holding their plates on their knees.

Guy stopped and took a good look at the man whose voice had aroused him from his reverie, and recognized him at once as one of the wheelsmen. He was a man rather past the prime of life, with grizzly hair and whiskers, and hands and face as brown as an Indian's. Although he was somewhat better dressed than the majority of his companions, and had doubtless bestowed a little pains upon his toilet before sitting down to supper, he was a rough-looking fellow, but still there was something in the mild blue eye which beamed from under his shaggy brows that won Guy's heart at once.

"You're the lad who lost his money, ain't you?" continued the sailor.

"Yes, I am," replied Guy, almost ready to cry again.

"Haven't you nary shot in the locker?"

"Not one. I'm dead broke."

"Never mind," said the sailor kindly, seeing that Guy's eyes were rapidly filling with tears. "I've known many a man in my time in the same fix. Why, bless you, when I was your age I used to think no more of it than I did of eating my regular allowance of salt horse or standing my trick at the wheel. Haven't had any supper, have you?"

"No; nor I can't get any, either."

"Yes, you can. Walk up to that table and call for what you want. We've four darkey waiters, but they've all gone out to the galley after the plum-pudding. They'll be in directly. When you have greased your jaw-tackle with some of our turkey and other fine fixings, tell us how you come to be out here so far from shore without a cent in your pocket for ballast."

Guy understood the invitation thus conveyed, and did not hesitate to accept it. He did not wait for the darkies to come in with the plum-pudding, and neither did he find "turkey and other fine fixings" on the chest; but there was an abundant supply of good, wholesome food, and Guy having found an empty plate helped himself most bountifully. His spirits rose a little as his appetite became somewhat appeased, and in

compliance with the wheelsman's repeated request he related the story of his loss, to which everybody listened with interest. When he came to tell that the steward had taken his room from him, and that the captain had ordered that he must go ashore at the steamer's first landing-place, he could scarcely restrain his tears.

After he had finished his narrative some of the sailors questioned him in regard to his history, but when they got through they knew no more than when they begun, for Guy gave anything but truthful answers. The wheelsman said nothing. He seemed to be thinking busily. When he had laid aside his plate and filled a short, black pipe, which he drew from his pocket, he beckoned to Guy, who followed him to the main deck.

"Now, then," said the wheelsman as he and the runaway seated themselves beside an open gangway, out of earshot of everybody, "you say your name is John Thomas. Mine's Dick Flint, and I'm glad to see you. How are you?"

"Well enough in body, but rather uncomfortable in mind," replied Guy as he took the sailor's hand and shook it cordially. "But, after all, I feel better than I did an hour ago, for I've had something to eat."

"I know how it seems to be hungry," said the wheelsman. "Now, maybe you wouldn't lose nothing if you was to tell me your plans. What are you going to do when you reach the Western country? Got any folks there?"

"I have an uncle, as I have already told you," replied Guy, "but I don't know where he is. Indeed, I don't much care; for since I left Syracuse I have changed my mind about trying to find him. I am going to be a hunter and trapper."

"You are!" exclaimed Flint, measuring the boy with his eye.

"Yes. I am going out to the Rocky Mountains to fight Indians and grizzly bears and make myself famous. There's plenty of fun and excitement to be found in that life, and I have always wanted to follow it."

"If it is excitement you are after you had better go to sea. You'll find it there, take my word for it. I don't know anything about this hunting business, but you'll need guns and traps, won't you? And how are you going to get them with your locker empty?"

"Yes, I shall need at least three hundred dollars; but where it is to come from I don't know. I must go to work and earn it somehow."

"Did you ever follow any kind of business?"

"No; I have been to school all my life."

"Well, you had better go a-sailoring with me. You can earn the money you want in that way. You see, I don't run here on the lakes—I belong outside."

"Outside?" repeated Guy.

"Yes, out on the ocean. I have sailed the blue water, man and boy, for thirty-five years, and if I live I expect to sail it thirty-five more. I left an old mother in Ohio when I went to sea—I ran away from her, like a fool as I was—and for twenty years I never heard from her. At last I found myself in Boston with a few hundreds in my pocket, and I thought I would go back to the old place, and, if my mother was still above hatches, the money I had saved would make her comfortable for the rest of her days. But I didn't find her," said Flint, while a sorrowful expression settled on his face—"never had a chance to tell her how sorry I was that I had treated her so, and that if she would forgive me and own me as her son once more I would try and make up for it. She had been under the sod ten years, and the old place was in the hands of strangers. Nobody knew me or ever heard of me. Of course I couldn't stay there, and hearing that there was a schooner in Chicago loading for Liverpool, I went up and engaged a berth on her. Finding that she wasn't ready to sail, I shipped as wheelsman in this tub to go one trip to Buffalo and back. The schooner will be off the ways and have her cargo aboard by the time we get there, and if you say the word maybe I can work you in as cabin-boy or something."

"But you forget that I must leave this boat at Saginaw," said Guy.

"No, I don't. There's more'n one way to get around that. Will you go? That's what I want to know?"

"I will, and I am under great obligations to you for the offer."

"Belay that," said the sailor. "I know what it is to be without money or friends—I am used to it, but you ain't, I can see that plain enough, and I want to help you out. Now about your money—when did you see it last?"

The loss of the purse was a matter that the wheelsman inquired into very particularly. He questioned Guy closely for ten minutes, and having finished his pipe, knocked the ashes from it and arose to his feet.

"I must go on watch now," said he. "When you get ready to go to bed, tumble into my bunk. There's room enough in it for both of us, and any of the boys will show you where it is. Keep up a good heart and you'll come out all right. I'll make a sailor man of you."

Flint walked off, leaving Guy sitting silent and thoughtful. His mind was relieved of a great load of anxiety, for he had found somebody to lean upon. And this new friend was more to his liking than the one he had lost, for he had more confidence in him. Having been a wanderer upon the face of the earth for thirty-five years, Flint of course knew all about his position and was fully competent to give advice in any emergency. But still there was one objection to him. Guy would have thought more of him if he had been a hunter instead of a sea-faring man. He did not want to go before the mast for he was too firmly wedded to his idea of living in the woods. He had thought and dreamed of it for years, and he clung to it still.

"This sailoring will be a merely temporary business," thought Guy, "and perhaps it is after all the best thing I could do. I am well enough acquainted with city life to know that I can't make much money at anything just

now, having no trade or profession. The only course open to me is to go into a store or office, and there I could command but three or four dollars a week, out of which I should have to pay my board, so I could not save anything. I may be able to earn eight or ten dollars a month as cabin-boy, and as I shall be under no expense for board of course I shall have all my money at the end of the voyage. Besides, while I am earning the three hundred dollars I need, I shall be getting used to hard fare and hard weather, and consequently I shall be in better condition to begin my career as a hunter. I shall adopt Flint's plan, for I don't think I could do better."

Having come to this conclusion Guy made his way to the sailors' quarters and went to bed in a very happy frame of mind.

CHAPTER Ia.

THE BUCKSKIN PURSE.

URING the next two days Guy was as light of heart as a boy could possibly be. He messed and bunked with the sailors, and soon began to feel so much at home among them that he would not have gone back into the cabin if he had been allowed the privilege. It is true he sometimes told himself that these unkempt, swaggering fellows in blue flannel shirts and canvas trousers were not just the sort of men that he had been in the habit of associating with at home. But after all he cared very little for that. He expected to mingle with rough characters and lead a rough life all his days, and the sooner he commenced the sooner he would get used to it.

He saw the steward occasionally, but that worthy never noticed him. He knew of course that Guy could not leave the steamer until she made a landing, and if in the meantime the crew were disposed to take him and care for him, it was no concern of his. All he wanted of Guy was to keep away from that part of the vessel devoted to the use of the cabin passengers.

Guy also saw Bob Walker every day, but never spoke to him. Indeed he was not allowed an opportunity, for whenever Bob caught a glimpse of him he would throw up his head, stick his cigar (and he always had one in his mouth) up toward his right cheek, and walk off with all the independence imaginable. This always made Guy very angry.

"He thinks he is some, but he'll be glad to sulk away and hide himself before we reach Chicago," soliloquized Guy. "He smokes at least ten or a dozen cigars every day; and twelve cigars at ten cents each amount to a dollar and twenty cents—in two days, two dollars and

forty cents. He told me he didn't have half a dollar in his pocket; and if that was the truth, where does he get those cigars? I don't wonder Flint suspects him. I would have suspected him myself if I had been sharp."

On the evening of the fourth day after leaving Norwall, Flint hurried into the crew's quarters, where Guy was dreaming away the time in his bunk, and shook him roughly by the shoulder.

"Roll out now," said he. "Saginaw is close by. We shall be alongside the pier in half an hour, and you must be ready to get off. Where's your dunnage?"

"Here it is," said Guy, pulling his valise and bundle out of an empty berth.

"What have you got in that carpet-sack? I heard something rattle, and you lift it as though it was heavy."

"So it is. I've got my hunting equipments in here."

"Roll 'em out, and let's have a look at 'em."

Guy accordingly produced the key and unlocked his valise. The sailor looked into it, examined the contents, and said:

"You can't take them things on board ship with you, and you might as well get rid of them one time as another. Chuck 'em overboard."

Guy was astonished, and at first felt like flatly refusing to obey the order. He had been to considerable trouble and some expense to collect the articles comprising the outfit, and he could not bear to part with them. But after a little reflection he thought better of it, and gathering them all up in his arms, he went to the door, looked up and down the deck to make sure that there was no one in sight, and threw them into the water.

The hunting-knife, on the handle of which he had intended to score a notch for every grizzly bear he "rubbed out;" the lead, which, melted into bullets, was to have created such havoc among the buffaloes and antelopes of the prairie; the traps that were to have made him rich and famous—all went down among the fishes. The rubber blankets alone remained afloat, and

after giving a melancholy flap or two, as if bidding him farewell, faded from his view in the fast-gathering twilight.

"Now," said the wheelsman, when Guy came back to him, "what's in that bundle? Your clothes? Well, put 'em into your carpet-sack, and while you're doing it, listen to what I have to say. I must talk fast, for both me and my partner have to be at the wheel when we make a landing. By the time we reach the pier it will be pitch dark. As soon as the gang-plank is out, take your dunnage and go ashore. Follow a long wood-pile which you will find on the pier until you come to the shore end of it, and then round to and come back to the propeller on the opposite side. Do you understand? I shall be relieved from the wheel by that time, and I'll be standing on deck just over the after gangway. You'll see me, and you must keep watch of me, too, for when the coast is clear I'll wave my hat, and you must run up the gang-plank and dodge into the engineers' locker. You know where that is, don't you?"

"Yes; but what will the engineers say if they see me going in?"

"Nothing. I've talked it all over with them, and they said I might stow you away in there. They're sorry for you because you lost your money. Behind the door of the locker you'll find a chest with a blanket and pillow in it, and all you've got to do is to turn in and keep still. You can lay there as snug as a bug in a rug, for nobody except the engineers ever goes near that locker, and they won't bother you."

"Flint!" shouted the mate on watch at this moment.

"Ay, ay, sir!" answered the sailor. "I must go to the wheel now. Can you remember what I have said?"

"Yes, I can," replied Guy.

"Be careful that no one sees you when you come aboard," said Flint earnestly, "or you'll get me and the engineer in hot water."

So saying, the wheelsman hurried away, and Guy sat down on one of the bunks near the door to wait until

the propeller reached the shore. She had scarcely touched the pier when the steward came up.

"Ah, here you are!" he exclaimed, slapping Guy familiarly on the shoulder. "I have been looking for you. It is time you were making yourself scarce about here."

"I am going as soon as the gang-plank is shoved out," replied Guy.

"But I want to *see* you go. I am well posted in the tricks of you dead-beats, and can't be fooled easy. Come on. That isn't all your baggage," he added as Guy picked up his valise. "You had a bundle when you came on board."

"If you are better acquainted with my business than I am, you had better attend to it," replied the boy, who did not like the steward's domineering tone. "I guess I know what I am doing."

He pushed past the officer as he spoke, and started down the stairs. On the way he met with Bob Walker, who was loitering around on purpose to see him off.

Bob winked at the steward and nodded familiarly to Guy, who returned the recognition with a savage scowl. When the latter disappeared down the stairs, Bob seated himself on the railing, and drawing a buckskin purse from his pocket, shook it in his closed hands, and smiled complacently. If one might judge by the loud jingling of its contents, the purse was well filled.

"Now, my young boy," said the steward, when he and Guy had descended the gang-plank that led to the pier, "I shall stand here until I see you safely ashore. Good-by, and the next time you start out on your travels, be sure you've got money in your pocket."

Guy bolted off without saying a word in reply. The extraordinary interest the steward took in his movements was something he had not bargained for, and he was very much afraid that he might not succeed in returning to the steamer without being seen by him or some one else who would order him ashore again.

What could he do in that case? Saginaw, what little

he was able to see of it by the aid of the light from the lanterns and torches on the pier, was not a cheerful-looking place. More than that, he did not know a soul there; and where could he go to pass the night and find a breakfast the next morning? The only friend he had that side of Norwall was the wheelsman, and sooner than lose him he would do something desperate.

Casting his eye over his shoulder occasionally, he saw that the steward was not only keeping watch of him, but that he was following him to see that he went ashore.

There were two others watching him also—Bob Walker, who was perched upon the rail, and Dick Flint, who stood at the foot of the stairs leading to the wheel-house.

"Bob is very anxious to see the last of me," said Guy to himself, "and that, in my opinion, is another proof that he stole my money. But he isn't as smart as he thinks he is, and neither is the steward. With Flint's help I can fool them both. There's no use in spoiling things by being in too great a hurry. The crew are getting ready to wood-up, so I shall have plenty of time."

Guy made his way along the wood-pile, but when he reached the end of it he could not "round to and come up on the other side," as the sailor had told him to do, so he kept straight ahead, and having reached the shore, stopped in the shadow of a warehouse. Neither Bob nor the steward could see him there, but as the pier and the steamer were brilliantly lighted up, he could observe their every movement.

He saw the steward, who had followed him to the end of the wood-pile, gaze steadily at the warehouse for a few minutes, and then turn about, go back to the propeller, and disappear in the gangway. Bob also left his perch after a little delay, and that was a signal to Guy to bestir himself.

He ran quickly down the bank to the pier, and throwing himself on his hands and knees behind the wood-

pile, made his way toward the steamer, dragging his valise after him. In a few seconds more he was crouching close at the edge of the pier, waiting impatiently for a sign from Dick Flint, who was walking slowly up and down the deck.

Bob Walker, having seen Guy disappear behind the warehouse, drew a long breath of relief, and pulled a fresh cigar from his pocket.

"He has gone at last," said he, and I am safe. His presence for the last three days has been a perfect torture to me; but from this time forward I shall stand in no fear of discovery. There comes the steward, and I might as well have a glass of ale."

Bob was very observing, and the Queen of the Lakes had not been many hours out of the port of Norwall before he began to learn something. He noticed that there were two or three gentlemen among the cabin passengers who made regular hourly visits to some place abaft the cabin, and that when they came back they were either smoking fragrant cigars or wiping their lips as if they had something good to eat or drink. Bob made it his business to follow them on one of their excursions, and found that they stopped in front of a little bar kept by the steward. After that Bob went there on his own responsibility, and became one of the best customers at the bar. As he always paid for what he got, and seemed to have plenty of money, the steward cultivated his acquaintance, and was ready to serve him with a cigar or a glass of ale at any hour of the day or night.

On this particular evening, as Bob made his way aft, a sailor followed him at a respectful distance. While he stood at the bar, the man, who was partially concealed behind a stanchion, took off his hat and waved it once or twice in the air, whereupon a figure which was crouching at the end of the wood-pile sprung up and darted into the gangway like a flash. It was Guy Harris.

Rapid as his movements were, however, he did not

succeed in entering the gangway without discovery; for Bob, having received some change from the steward, who at once closed the bar and went off, faced about, and while putting the money away in his purse, happened to cast his eye toward the pier just in time to see Guy jump up from behind the wood-pile. He thought he recognized him, and to make sure of it leaned quickly over the side and obtained a good view of him.

"Now that plan won't work, my young friend," he exclaimed, and so astonished was he that he spoke the words aloud. "It will never do to let you stay here. I'll have you put off again before you are five minutes older."

Bob hastily put the purse into his pocket and was hurrying forward when he found himself brought to a stand-still by a burly fellow who suddenly stepped before him and blocked up his path.

"Hold hard there!" said the latter. "Where are you going?"

"I want to find the steward," answered Bob, trying to crowd by the sailor.

"Hold hard there, I say!" repeated the man, seizing Bob by the collar and pushing him back. "What do you want to see the steward for?"

"What's that to you, you insolent fellow? Let me pass, and don't dare put your hand on me again. If you do, I will report you to the captain."

"Oh, you will, will you? Come on, there's the old man on the pier."

Flint, for it was he, linked his brawny arm through Bob's and made a motion to pull him toward the stairs, but the boy drew back.

"Why don't you come on?" cried the wheelsman. "I thought you wanted to report me to the cap'n. What have you got to say to the steward, I ask you?"

"There's a fellow below who is going to steal a ride to Chicago," replied Bob, alarmed at the man's tone and manner.

"No, he hain't," said Flint. "He's only come back to get his money. Hand it out here."

Bob's assurance was pretty well frightened out of him by these words. His secret was not safe after all. He made a strong effort to keep up his courage.

"Hand what out?" he asked, trying to assume a look of injured innocence.

"Oh, you don't know nothing about it, do you? I want that buckskin purse that you just put into your pocket. There's fifteen dollars in it, or ought to be, and you stole it from your room-mate on the first night out from Norwall. Hand it over, I say."

"I didn't steal any money. You didn't see me put any buckskin purse into my pocket, and I haven't got any, either. The best thing you can do is to let me pass."

"You needn't put on no frills with me, 'cause they won't go down. You didn't know that the curtain of the window of your state-room was up that night, did you? You didn't think I saw you when you took that purse out of your room-mate's pocket, did you? Well, I did; and I heard you tell him when he asked you what you were doing, that you had been out on deck to see how things were going on, and that it was raining buckets and blowing great guns butt-end foremost. Aha!" he added, seeing that an expression of unbounded astonishment overspread Bob's pale face. "I know all about it, don't I? I stood here, too, while you were loafing at that bar, and saw you take that same purse from your pocket and pay for a glass of something out of it. And there it is, right there," said Flint, making a sudden dash at the boy's pocket and clutching it and its contents with a firm grasp. "Now hand it out without no more words, or I'll walk you down to the old man and have you locked up for a thief. I sha'n't ask you again."

Bob was utterly confounded. The conversation between him and Guy on the first night out had taken place just as the sailor had repeated it, and that was the time he had stolen the purse from his friend's pocket. But how in the world could the theft have been found

out? Guy did not see him take the money, for he was asleep. Beyond a doubt Flint told the truth when he said that he had observed the whole proceeding. Overcome with fear and rage Bob could not speak. Mistaking his silence for obstinacy, the wheelsman seized him by the collar and began dragging him toward the stairs, intending to take him before the captain. Then Bob found his tongue very speedily.

"Hold on," he cried. "If I give you the money will you promise that you won't blow on me?"

"I'll keep still if you do; but if I hear you lisp a word about a fellow's trying to steal a ride to Chicago I'll have you locked up as sure as you're alive. Now," he added, as Bob placed the purse in his hands, "how much have you spent out of it?"

"Just ten cents."

"Well, hand it out here. I must have fifteen dollars. Not a red less will satisfy me."

"I have nothing smaller than a dollar."

"Then give me that. I'll take it for interest."

Bob did not dare refuse. He gave the money to the wheelsman, who said, as he put it away in the purse:

"Now go into your room, and don't show your face on deck again until this vessel is well under way. Keep a still tongue in your head and I'll do the same."

Bob, glad enough to get out of the man's sight, at once started for the cabin. Flint watched him out of sight and then rolled off toward the wheel-house, winking and nodding his head as if he were highly gratified at what he had done.

CHAPTER X.

WHAT BOB FOUND IN CHICAGO.

UY HAVING, as he supposed, made his way on board the propeller without being seen by anybody, ran with all possible speed toward the engine-room, keeping a good lookout on all sides for fear of meeting the steward who, as he had learned to his cost, had a way of turning up most unexpectedly. That officer was not in sight, however, but somebody else was, as Guy found when he entered the engineer's room. It was the striker, who was busy oiling the machinery.

The runaway stopped, undecided what to do. The man, hearing the sound of his footsteps, looked up, and after casting his eyes all about him, nodded encouragingly, and pointed with his thumb over his shoulder toward the door of the locker, which stood invitingly open. This reassured Guy, who started forward again, and in less time than it takes to tell it, was snugly curled away in the box behind the door.

The engineer came in soon afterward to put away his oil can, and when he went out he locked the door after him.

Guy felt perfectly safe then, and told himself that there was no danger of discovery. No one came near the locker until the propeller was well out from Saginaw, and then Flint appeared, carrying under his arm a bundle wrapped up in a newspaper.

"Well, our plans worked all right, didn't they?" said he, and he seemed as highly elated as Guy himself. "You couldn't have a better hiding-place than this. The steward would never think of looking for you here,

even if he knew you were on board, which he doesn't. There's only one in the secret beside me and the engineers, and that's the friend who stole your money."

"Bob Walker!" gasped Guy. "How did he find it out?"

"He saw you when you came aboard."

"Then my cake is all dough," said Guy in great alarm. "He'll blow on me sure."

"I'll risk him, and insure his silence for a dime," returned Flint. "He's afraid of me, and he'd better be; for if I hear of his trying to get you into trouble, I'll have him before the cap'n in less time than he could say 'hard a port' with his mouth open. Here's your purse. I knew he had it."

"Flint, you're a good fellow," said Guy, so overjoyed that he could not speak plainly. "I never can repay you. How did you get it?"

"I saw him have it in his hand, and scared it out of him. I made him believe that I was looking through the window when he took it out of your pocket, and told him that if he didn't hand it over, I'd have him locked up. He spent ten cents of the money, but I made him give me a dollar, so you've got ninety cents for interest. Here's some bread and cold meat I brought you," said Flint as he deposited his bundle in one corner of the chest. "You will have to live on it until we reach Chicago, for it won't be safe for me to come here very often. Somebody might see me. You can walk around a little of nights, but don't show your face outside the locker in the day-time. Good-by."

"Now that's a friend worth having," said Guy to himself, after the wheelsman had gone out. "Nobody need tell me again that it is such hard work to get on in the world. It's sheer nonsense. One can always find somebody to lend him a helping hand. I am as comfortable as I care to be, and wouldn't go home if I had the chance. I am my own master, and can do as I please without asking anybody's permission. I only wish Flint was a hunter instead of a sailor."

While these thoughts were passing through Guy's mind, he was rummaging about in the chest (it was as dark as a pocket in the locker), searching for the bundle Flint had left. Having found it, he ate a few slices of the bread and meat, and then pulling the blankets over his head, curled up and went to sleep.

Before twenty-four hours had passed over his head Guy found occasion to change his mind in regard to some things. He learned that it was exactly the reverse of comfortable to be shut up in such close quarters. He grew weary of this confinement, and longed to get out where he could see what was going on; but he followed Flint's instructions to the very letter. He ventured out occasionally at night for five or ten minutes, but during the day remained closely concealed, passing the time in sleeping and pacing up and down his narrow prison. While he was taking his exercise he was always on the alert, and the moment a key was inserted into the lock or a hand placed upon the door-knob, he would jump into his box and cover himself up with the blankets. Three days and nights were spent in this way, and then Flint once more made his appearance.

"It's all right now, my hearty," said he cheerfully. "We'll be in Chicago in another hour, and you mustn't waste any time in getting off after the boat is made fast, for I sha'n't breathe easy until I know you are safe ashore."

"Does anybody suspect anything?" asked Guy anxiously.

"Nobody except that friend of yours. He hasn't said a word, and it is just as well for him that he didn't; but he's been all over the steamer a dozen times looking for you. How have you enjoyed yourself, anyhow? Grub all gone yet?"

"Yes; and I'm as hungry as a wolf."

"Never mind; we'll have a good supper before long. Be careful that no one sees you when you go off the boat."

With this piece of advice Flint went out, and Guy,

having placed his valise close at hand, walked impatiently up and down the locker, waiting for the propeller to make the landing.

Time moves on laggard wings when one is in a hurry, and Guy thought he had never passed so long an hour before; but at last the engineer's bell rang, the jarring and rocking of the boat subsided into a gentle, gliding motion, the capstan overhead began to groan and rattle, and finally a heavy bump or two announced that the wharf had been reached. Guy heard the men come down to shove out the gang-plank, and at the same moment one of the engineers pushed open the door of the locker and nodded to him—a signal previously agreed upon between him and Flint that the coast was clear.

Guy picked up his valise and ran quickly through the engine-room, but when he came within sight of the gangway he saw that the propeller was still moving ahead, and that the gang-plank had not yet been pushed out. More than that, his own enemy, the steward, was coming slowly down the stairs, and Guy caught sight of him just in time to avoid discovery by dodging into a dark passage-way.

As soon as the steamer's headway was checked by the lines the gang-plank was shoved out, and a man on the pier, who had been waiting for an opportunity to come on board, ran up and was cordially greeted by the steward.

"Halloo, Boyle!" exclaimed the officer as the two met at the foot of the stairs, "what do you want here? Are you looking for anybody?"

"Yes, I am," replied the man.

"It isn't me, is it?" asked the steward with a laugh.

"No, not this time. I am after a couple of boys who are supposed to have taken passage on this steamer from Norwall. Good-looking young fellows they are, I judge from the description I have of them. One is tall and slender, with light hair and blue eyes, is dressed in black and wears a straw hat. His name is Guy Harris."

"Great Scott!" thought the listening runaway, it is all over with me now."

"I don't know any boy of that name," replied the steward, "but we certainly had one aboard who answered to that description. He got off at Saginaw, or rather, we put him off because he had no money. What is the matter?"

"Nothing, only these two young rascals have run away from home, and I am directed to detain them until their fathers arrive—that's all. Harris got off at Saginaw, you say? I don't care; his father is rich, I hear, and the more trouble I have to catch him the more money I shall make. The other is short and thickset, with black hair and eyes, wears a blue beaver overcoat, carries a small black valise, and is much given to smoking good cigars. His name is Robert Walker."

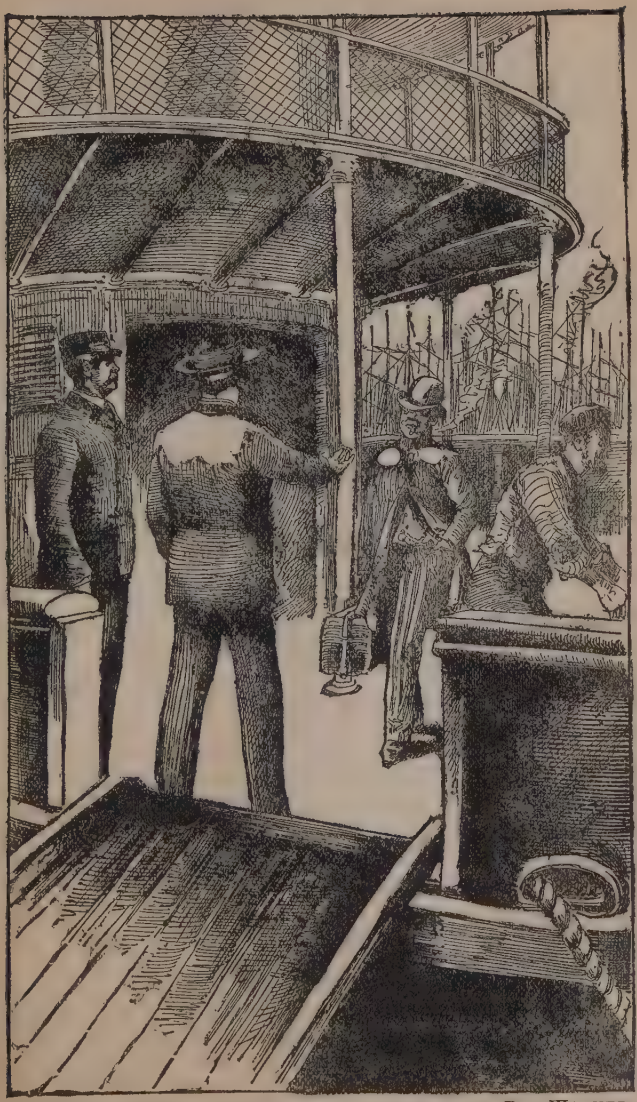
"I don't know him by that name, but there is such a boy on board, and here he comes now," said the steward, as the sound of footsteps was heard at the top of the stairs.

The steward and his companion turned their backs and appeared to be very deeply interested in something that was occurring on the wharf, while Guy, trembling with excitement and alarm, drew himself into as small a compass as possible, and waited to see what was going to happen. He was in momentary fear of discovery, for the two men were scarcely more than twenty feet away, and must have seen him if they had once turned their eyes in his direction.

The footsteps sounded nearer, and presently Bob Walker appeared, smoking as usual. He carried his valise in one hand, and the other, being thrust into the pocket of his trousers, held back his overcoat so as to show the gold watch-chain that hung across his vest.

He nodded familiarly to the steward, and was about to pass down the gang-plank when he who had been addressed as Boyle suddenly turned and faced him. He gave a stage start, opened his eyes to their widest extent, looked fixedly at the boy for a moment, and then slowly extended his hand, greeting him with:

"Why, Bob, is it possible? How do you do? How



"THE FOOTSTEPS SOUNDED NEARER AND PRESENTLY BOB WALKER APPEARED SMOKING".

do you do, Bob Walker? How's your father and mother and all the rest of the good people of Norwall? I didn't expect to see you here. Give us a shake."

Bob, taken completely by surprise, involuntarily extended his hand, but suddenly recollecting himself, as quickly withdrew it.

"I didn't expect to see you either," said he; "but, as it happens, you've made a mistake. My name is Wheeler."

Bob's attempt to appear easy and unconcerned was a miserable failure. He knew who the man was, and what brought him there, for he accidentally caught a glimpse of something on the under side of the lappel of his coat. It was a detective's shield!

Although his heart almost came up into his mouth, he did not lose his courage. He tried to "brave it out," but, of course, overdid the matter, and his behavior was enough to have removed the last doubt as to his identity, had any existed in the mind of the detective.

"And more than that," continued Bob, "I don't live in Norwall. My home is in Omaha. Good-evening!"

"*Good*-evening," said the detective. "No offense, I hope?"

"None whatever," replied Bob politely. "We are all liable to make mistakes."

"You don't happen to have a good cigar about your clothes, do you?" said the officer.

Of course Bob had, for he was always well supplied, and promptly produced one.

The detective put it between his teeth, and accepting Bob's cigar, applied the lighted end to his own, and puffed away until it was fairly started, all the while running his eye over the face and figure of the boy before him.

"Thank you," said he; "we'll smoke as we go along. If you are all ready, I am. I see you understand the situation, so there's no use in wasting time in words. Your father will be along some time to-morrow, and

any little explanations you may want—why, he'll give 'em to you. I guess we had better be walking along now."

"Haven't you instructions to arrest somebody else?" asked Bob, with wonderful courage and self-possession.

"Yes; but he doesn't seem to be here. He was put off at Saginaw."

"I know he was, but he didn't stay put off. He is somewhere on this boat now."

"My gracious!" gasped Guy, squeezing himself closer against the bulk-head.

"Oh, you're mistaken," said the steward, with some surprise in his tones. "I saw him go off myself."

"And I saw him come back," insisted Bob. "He is concealed somewhere among the cargo."

"Humph!" exclaimed the engineer, who, while he pretended to be very busy rubbing down the machinery, was listening to every word of the conversation. "How could he live three days without a bite to eat or a drop to drink?"

"That's easy enough done when one makes up his mind to it," said Bob. "He's on this vessel, and I know it. He is as deep in the mud as I am, and I don't want to go back without him. Won't you look for him, Mr. Officer?"

"No, I guess not," answered the detective, who put more faith in the steward's story than he did in Bob's. "I'll find him, sooner or later—you needn't worry about that. We'd better go along now. Come on."

Bob might still have continued to argue the matter, had not the detective taken him gently but firmly by the arm and led him down the gang-plank.

Guy, from his place of concealment, watched him until he disappeared in the darkness, and that was the last he ever saw of him.

And what became of Bob after that? His adventures would make a long story; but with them we have at present nothing to do. It will be enough to say that he went home with his father, who arrived in Chicago the

next day; but he did not long remain with him. Although he heard nothing to induce the belief that the attempt he had made upon Mr. Harris' safe was known, there were plenty who were acquainted with the fact that he had run away from home, and that made him very discontented. The war broke out shortly afterward, and Bob went into the service, enlisting as landsman in the Mississippi squadron.

In two years, by bravery and sheer force of character (it is not always the good who are prosperous, except in novels), he raised himself to the rank of acting ensign, and held the position of executive officer of one of the finest "tin-clads" in the fleet. But he was not satisfied with this. The evil in his nature was too strong to be kept down, and with his captain he entered into a conspiracy to surrender his vessel to the rebels for a large amount of cotton—some say four hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth.

Bob's conspiracy was defeated through the vigilance of a young officer, whose name is known to but few, and whose exploit, as far as I have been able to learn, was never mentioned in the report of the Secretary of the Navy.

Their villainous plot being discovered, Bob and his commanding officer made their escape from the vessel one dark night, and that was the last that was ever seen of them.

Guy saw all that transpired, and listened to the conversation between Bob and the detective like one in a dream. He now looked upon the temporary loss of his money as a blessing in disguise, for had he paid his passage to Chicago his arrest would have been certain. But he felt comparatively safe, for Boyle had been put on a wrong scent. It would take him two or three days to go to Saginaw and back, and by that time, if the schooner was ready to sail, Guy and his friend would be miles on their way toward the Atlantic Ocean.

So fearful was he, however, that the detective might yet return and take him into custody, or that he might

be waiting on the wharf ready to receive him when he came out, that Guy dared not leave his hiding-place.

He saw the steward go back up the stairs and the cabin passengers come down and go ashore, but he did not move until the engineer stepped up and tapped him on the shoulder.

"Look here, my friend," said he, with some impatience in his tone, "we've done all we could for you, and now you'd better be making tracks. We don't want you here any longer."

The man's looks indicated very plainly that, if he did not go off the boat of his own accord and at once, he would be helped off, so Guy lost no time in putting himself in motion. He caught up his valise, and without stopping to thank the engineer for his kindness in allowing him to use his locker for a hiding-place during the voyage, hurried down the gang-plank, and stopped in the shadow of a building on the opposite side of the wharf. There he was safe from observation, and there he remained until he saw the wheelsman come ashore with his dunnage slung over his shoulder.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BOARDING-HOUSE.

H, FLINT!" exclaimed Guy, running to meet the sailor, "you don't know how glad I am to see you. I have had a narrow escape, I tell you. I just got away from an officer who captured Bob by the skin of my teeth."

With this introduction Guy began the story of his recent adventure, to which his companion listened with all his ears. He was surprised as well as delighted to hear what had happened to Bob Walker, and hastened to calm the fears of his young friend by assuring him that as long as he followed in his (Flint's) wake he was in no danger. In the first place, he would take him where no detective would ever think of looking for him; and in the second, they would remain in the city but a day or two at the very furthest, and by the time Boyle could go to Saginaw and back, they would be on their way to Liverpool and safe from pursuit.

Flint fulfilled the first part of his promise by conducting Guy to a sailors' boarding-house in an obscure street, where they ate supper and took lodgings for the night. After breakfast the next morning they set out in company to call upon the agent, whose business it was to ship the crew that was to man the schooner during her voyage to Liverpool. They found him at his office, and after listening to some astonishing stories from Flint, who declared that Guy understood his business as cabin-boy, having just been discharged from the propeller Queen of the Lakes, where he had served in that capacity for the last two months, the agent was finally induced to add the boy's name to the shipping articles and pay him his advance. Then, after a visit

to a cheap clothing store, where Flint purchased an outfit for Guy, they returned to the boarding-house and thence made their way to their vessel, the Ossipee, which was almost ready to sail.

During the first part of the voyage Guy had but little to complain of. Although he was kept busy all the time, his duties were comparatively light, the officers were kind, the food abundant and well cooked, and the weather mild and agreeable. Guy even begun to think that a career on the ocean-wave was, after all, very pleasant and desirable, and sometimes had serious thoughts of abandoning his idea of becoming a hunter and spending the remainder of his days upon the water. But even a sailor's life has its dark side, as he discovered when they reached the Gulf of St. Lawrence. During a violent gale the schooner sprung a leak, and from that time until she reached a port in Nova Scotia, into which she put for repairs, Guy never once closed his eyes in sleep. He was kept at the pumps until every bone and muscle in his body ached with fatigue, and when relieved from them it was only to perform some other duty equally laborious. It was all the crew could do to keep the schooner afloat, and for five long, dreary days Guy stood face to face with death in one of its most appalling shapes.

And what a change that storm made in the disposition of every man on board! The officers raved and swore, and hastened obedience to their orders by threatening to knock the men overboard with handspikes and belaying pins. Guy, bewildered by the confusion and noise, and frightened almost out of his senses by the danger he was in, was forever getting into somebody's way, and of course came in for the lion's share of abuse. He was kicked and cuffed every hour in the day and pushed about as if he had no more feeling than the freight which was so unceremoniously thrown overboard. Once the mate ordered him to "lay for'd and lend a hand at the jib down-haul," and while Guy was looking about to see which way to go, the officer picked

up a rope and brought it down across his shoulders with a sounding whack. It might have fared hard with Guy then had not Flint, who happened to overhear the order, saved him from further punishment by hurrying forward and executing it for him.

Port was reached at last, and we can imagine how relieved Guy was and with what feelings of delight he listened to the speech the captain made to the crew, in which he informed them that the vessel was so badly damaged that she must go into the dry-docks again and that the hands were to be discharged with three months' pay. He packed up his dunnage with great alacrity, and as he followed Flint over the side, declared that he had seen enough of salt water to last him as long as he lived, and that the rest of his life should be on shore.

"Why, you haven't seen anything of a sailor's life yet," said his companion. "I know we've had rather a rough time for the last week, but that's nothing. Of course one must work if he goes to sea, and so he must if he follows any other business. You'll see better times when you are once fairly afloat."

"But just look at the danger," said Guy.

"Humph! look at the danger you're in now while you are ashore," returned Flint. "Suppose, while we are passing along this row of buildings, that a brick should fall from one of the chimneys and strike you on the head! Where would you be? Or suppose you should accidentally put yourself in the path of a runaway horse! Wouldn't you be in danger then? The safest place in the world is on shipboard. That's a sailor's doctrine."

"But it isn't my doctrine," said Guy. "And another thing. I don't like to have a man swear at me and say that for two cents he would throw me into the drink. If I am to be cuffed and whipped and jawed every day I might as well be—somewhere."

Guy was about to say that he might as well be at home, for he had run away from it on purpose to escape such discipline. He came very near exposing himself, for he had told Flint that he had no home, and he

knew that was the reason the sailor was so kind to him.

"And don't you remember how that mate beat me with a rope?" added Guy. "If you hadn't taken my part he might have been pounding me yet, for I didn't know where to go to find the jib down-haul."

"Oh, that's nothing," said Flint encouragingly. "A boy who goes to sea may make up his mind to one thing, and that is, he's going to get more kicks than ha'pence. And it may not be his fault; but if he gets 'em after he learns his duties, then it *is* his fault. You didn't see me struck or hear anybody say he'd throw me overboard. That's 'cause I know my business and 'tend to it. But you will see better times after we get fairly afloat. Halloo! let's go in here and see what's going on."

Flint's attention was attracted by the sound of voices and shouts of laughter which issued from a very dingy-looking building they were at that moment passing. Guy glanced up at the sign and saw that it was a sailor's boarding-house.

Flint opened the door that led into the public room, and Guy followed him in. The boy did not like the looks of the apartment, for it too vividly recalled to his mind the quarters occupied by the steerage passengers on board the Queen of the Lakes. It was not much like the steerage in appearance, but it was fully as gloomy and uninviting.

One side of the room was occupied with tables and chairs, and the other by a small bar, at which cheap cigars and villainous liquors were kept for sale. The floor was covered with sawdust, and littered with cigar stumps and "old soldiers," and the walls were discolored by tobacco smoke, which filled the room almost to suffocation.

A party of sailors were seated at one of the tables, engaged in a game of "sell out," now and then laying down their cards for a few seconds to bury their noses in tumblers of hot punch, which they kept stowed away on little shelves under the table. They looked up as Flint and his companion entered, and a man who was

standing behind the bar, and who seemed to be the proprietor of the house, came forward to relieve them of their bundles, and inquired what he could do for them.

"Can you grub and lodge us 'till we find a ship?" asked Flint.

"Of course I can," said the proprietor. "This is the very place to come. Supper will be ready in an hour. Will you sit down by the stove and have a drop of something warm?"

"I don't mind. We've had a rough time outside for the last week, and hain't got warmed up yet."

The sailor and his young companion drew a couple of chairs near the stove, and sat down, whereupon a short, thickset man, who, seated in a remote corner of the room, had been regarding them rather sharply ever since they came in, arose and pulled his chair to Flint's side.

"Did you say you want to ship?" he asked in a low tone, at the same time casting a quick glance toward the card players.

"Yes," replied the sailor, running his eye over the man; "but we hain't in no hurry about it."

"Well, I am in a great hurry to raise a crew, and should like to get one to-night. I am second mate of the clipper Santa Maria, bound for Honolulu—forty dollars advance. Better say you'll put your name down. Best ship you ever sailed in, and you'll find every thing lovely aboard her. The cap'n's a gentleman. Ask him for a chaw of tobacco, and you'll have to mind your eye or get knocked overboard with a whole plug of it, and the mates ain't none of your loblolly boys neither. What do you say?"

"Say no, mate," exclaimed one of the card players, all of whom had paused in their game to hear what the mate had to say to Flint. "Don't go near the bloody nooker."

"What's the matter with her?" asked Flint.

"Why, she's got a crew aboard she never discharges, and who don't sign articles," answered the sailor.

"Then I guess I won't ship," said Flint, picking up his chair and moving it nearer the players.

"You'd better not. She's been trying for three days to find a crew—the cap'n, both the mates, and all the shipping agents in port have been running about the streets looking for hands, but everybody who knows her is shy of her. She has borne a hard name from the day she was launched."

"And all through just such fellows as you are!" cried the mate, jumping to his feet, his face red with anger. "Don't I wish I had you with me just one more voyage? I'd haze you until you were ready to jump overboard."

"But you'll never have me with you another voyage," said the sailor, with a laugh. "One cruise in the Santa Maria is as much as I can stand. Ay, you had better go!" he continued, as the mate buttoned his coat and hurried toward the door. "You're no good here, and you'll never raise a crew until you call on the sharks."

"Look out that I don't get you in that way, my hearty," exclaimed the mate, as he slammed the door behind him.

The sailors once more turned to their cards, and Flint moved back beside Guy. At this moment the landlord came up, bringing on a tray two glasses filled with some steaming liquor. Flint took them off the tray and placed them on the floor behind the stove.

"What did that sailor mean when he said that the Santa Maria had a crew who don't sign articles?" asked Guy in a whisper.

"He meant ghosts," replied Flint.

"Ghosts?" repeated Guy. "Humph!"

"Hold on there, and don't say 'humph' till you know what you're talking about," said the sailor sharply.

"Why, Flint, there are no such things. You surely don't believe in them?"

"I surely do, though."

"You have never seen one."

"Avast there!" exclaimed Flint.

"Have you, really? What did it look like?"

"They take different shapes. I've seen them that looked like rats, and I've seen 'em that looked like black cats. Sometimes you can't see 'em at all, and them kind is the worst, for they're the ones that talks. Once, when I was a youngster, a little older than you, I sailed in a ship out of Boston. One night it blew such a gale that it took twenty-six of us to furl the mainsail, and we were almost an hour in doing it, too. We lost one man overboard while we were about it, and every night after that when the order was given to lay aloft to loose or furl the sails, we were certain to find Dave Curry there before us working like a trooper. Oh, it's gospel," said Flint earnestly, seeing that an expression of incredulity settled on the face of his young companion; "'cause I saw him often with my own eyes, and what I tell you I have seen, you may put down as the truth. Shortly after that I sailed in a brig whose bell every night when the mid-watch was called struck four times, and no one ever went near it."

"Who struck it then, if no one went near it?" demanded Guy, not yet convinced.

"The ghost of a quartermaster, and a man-o'-wars man who was lost overboard when the brig made her first cruise. The last voyage I made was in a ship bound around the Cape. When the time came we begun to prepare for bad weather by sending down the royal yards and mast and getting in the flying-jib boom. One of the hands was out on the boom and had just sung out, 'haul in!' when a sea broke over the bows and he was never seen afterward. But every night we used to hear him, as plain as I can hear myself speaking now, calling out as if he were tired of waiting, 'haul in!' We kept a good lookout, but although we could never see any one, we always heard the voice. What are you looking at them glasses so steady for? You don't want to drink that stuff, do you?"

"No; I drink nothing stronger than beer."

"And if you know when you are well off you will let that alone," said Flint earnestly. "It never does nobody no good. It takes your money as fast as you can earn it, and gets you into scrapes. I know by experience."

"Why don't you empty one of the glasses?" asked Guy.

"Do you think I'm fool enough to drink anything in this house?" inquired Flint, in a low whisper. "Didn't you hear that fellow tell the mate that he'd never ship a crew till he got the sharks to help him."

"Yes, but I don't know what he means."

"You never saw a two-legged shark, did you?"

"No, I never did."

"Well, there's one," said Flint, jerking his thumb over his shoulder toward the bar.

"Who? Where? You don't mean the landlord?"

"Don't I, though? I don't mean nobody else. I can tell one of them fellows as far as I can see him. He'll have a crew for the Santa Maria before many hours, now you see if he don't. That's what he's up to, and that's why I don't drink the stuff in that glass. Them fellows playing cards are all fools. They'll be out of sight of land some fine morning, now you see if they don't—tomorrow may be."

Flint settled back in his chair, nursed his right leg, and winked knowingly at Guy.

"I don't understand," said the boy. "They won't ship aboard the Santa Maria, will they?"

"Yes, they will."

"They needn't do it unless they choose."

"Ah! needn't they though? That shows all you know. You see the landlord is keeping them here by dosing 'em with something strong—a sailor is always ready to stay where he can get plenty to drink—and by the time it comes dark they'll be half-seas over. Then the landlord will drug 'em to sleep by putting something in their drinks, and get help and carry them aboard the Santa Maria. By the time they get their senses again they'll be miles away."

"But they can't do duty if they're drugged," said Guy.

"No matter. If they can't do duty to-day they can to-morrow, and the cap'n 'll take 'em so long as they ain't dead."

"Let's get away from here and go somewhere else," said Guy in great alarm. "I don't want to stay with such a man. I'm afraid of him."

"Well, you needn't be. All we've got to do is to keep clear heads on our shoulders, and we're all right. Just bear one thing in mind. As long as you stay in this house don't drink nothing, not even water."

"Supper!" cried the landlord at this moment. "Walk right into the dining-room, boys. Why, what's the matter, mates?" he added, glancing from Flint and his companion to the untasted glasses on the floor; "don't they suit you?"

"No; they're too stiff and got too much sugar in 'em."

"Then step right up to the bar and let me mix you another glass. It sha'n't cost you a cent."

"Never mind now," said Flint. "We'll wait until after supper."

Guy, who had not had a square meal for a week, was delighted to find himself seated at a well-filled table once more. He fell to work in good earnest and made ample amends for his long fast. There were two drawbacks to the full enjoyment of the meal, and one was, he could not drink anything. Forgetting himself on several occasions he raised his cup of coffee to his lips, but being checked by a look or a sly nudge from Flint, always put it down untasted. The other drawback was the company in which he found himself.

The sailors knew little of the etiquette of the table, and cared less. They were merry and quarrelsome by turns, pounded on the table with their fists until the dishes jumped up and performed jigs and somersaults in the air, and talked, laughed, and swore at the top of their voices. The landlord seemed accustomed to all

this, and never interfered with his guests except when it was necessary to keep them from coming to a free fight.

The sailors left the table one after the other, as their appetites were satisfied, and returned to the public room, whither they were followed by Flint and Guy, the former leading the way. As they were passing along the hall that led to the bar-room, the sailor suddenly paused, looked steadily at something before him for a moment, and then drew back.

"It's come, and sooner than I thought for," said he, in an excited whisper,

"What has come?" asked Guy.

"Stick your head out of that door and see for yourself. Be careful to keep out of sight of the landlord."

Guy advanced cautiously toward the door, wondering what it could be that had so excited his companion, and Flint followed close to his heels, rolling up his sleeves and making other preparations indicative of a desire or intention to fight somebody.

CHAPTER XII.

IN THE COURT-ROOM.

UY expected to see something startling, but was disappointed. The public room was as quiet and orderly as it had been at any time since he entered it. The sailors had resumed their game, and the landlord was standing behind the bar with a row of glasses ranged on a shelf before him, into each of which he was putting a small portion of a white powder that he took from a paper he held in his hand. Then he filled all the glasses with some kind of liquor, stirred them with a spoon, and placing them upon a tray started toward the table at which the sailors were sitting. "It is my treat now, lads," said he, "and here is something to make your suppers set easy."

"Don't touch it," shouted Flint, suddenly starting forward. "Knock him down, some of you. That stuff is doctored.

Guy did not understand just what Flint meant by this, but it was plain that the sailors did. They all jumped to their feet in an instant, while the landlord put down the tray and looked at Guy's companion with an expression on his face that was perfectly fiendish. A moment afterward a glass propelled by his hand came sailing through the air, and was shivered into fragments against the wall close beside Flint's head.

"I'll be at you in a second," said the latter, as he coolly made his way behind the bar. "There's the stuff that's in your glasses, mates," he added, throwing upon the counter the paper that contained the remainder of the drug. "If there is a 'pothecary among you, may be he can tell you what it is—I can't."

The sailors had, while at the supper table, given abundant evidence that they were in just the right

humor for a row, and this was all that was needed to start one going. As Flint came out from behind the counter to pay his respects to the landlord in return for the glass the latter had thrown at his head, that worthy retreated toward the dining-room shouting lustily for help. It came almost immediately in the shape of three or four villainous-looking fellows who were armed with bludgeons. Their sudden appearance astonished Guy. He had seen no men about the house, and he could not imagine where they sprung from so quickly.

"There's a man who wants to raise a fight," cried the landlord, pointing to Flint. "Down with him."

"Stand by me, mates," said Flint, throwing off his hat, and pushing back his sleeves, "and we will clean the shanty."

The opposing parties came together without a moment's delay, and the noise and confusion that followed almost made Guy believe that pandemonium had broken loose. Having never witnessed such a scene before he was overcome with fear and bewilderment. Deprived of speech and the power of action, he stood watching the struggling men, all unconscious of the fact that he was every moment in danger of being stricken down by the glasses which whistled past his ears like bullets. At last the lights were extinguished, and this seemed to arouse Guy from his trance of terror. As quick as a flash he darted into the dining-room, and jerking open a door that led into the street, soon put a safe distance between himself and the combatants.

"Great Scott!" panted Guy, seating himself under a gas-lamp to rest after his rapid run. "I didn't bargain for such things as this. I'd rather be at home a great sight. Why, a man's life isn't safe among such people. I am tired of the sea, and homesick besides; and I think the best thing I can do is to start for Norwall while I have money in my pocket."

Had Guy acted upon this sensible conclusion, he might have saved himself from a great deal of misery

that was yet in store for him. While he was thinking about it—trying to picture to himself the commotion his unexpected return would create in his father's house, and wondering what sort of a reception would be extended to him—he heard some one coming rapidly down the sidewalk; and fearing that it might be the landlord, or some of his assistants, who were searching for him, he sprung up and darted down a cross street that led to the dock. He was running directly into more trouble, if he had only known it—trouble that he was not to see the end of for months; and he brought it all on himself by so simple a thing as going to the dock.

While he was running along at the top of his speed, intent on getting out of hearing of the footsteps that seemed to be pursuing him, he suddenly became aware that there was something exciting going on in advance of him. He stopped to listen, and the blood seemed to curdle in his veins when he heard the sounds of a fierce struggle and a faint, gasping cry for help.

He looked in the direction from which the sounds came, and by the aid of the light from a gas-lamp, a short distance behind him, he could distinguish the forms of three men, who, clasped in a close embrace, were swaying back and forth, and so near the edge of the wharf that a single misstep on the part of one of them would have precipitated them all into the water.

"Another free fight," thought Guy, whose first impulse was to turn and take to his heels. "These sailors are a dreadful set, and I'll not stay among them a day longer."

"Help! help!" shouted one of the men, his cry being almost instantly choked off by a strong grasp on his throat.

"Give up the money," said a hoarse voice, "or over you go."

A light suddenly dawned upon Guy's mind; he begun to understand the matter now.

Two ruffians had set upon somebody with the intention of robbing him and throwing him into the harbor,

and he was fighting hard for his life and property. Instantly Guy's tongue was loosed, and he begun shouting at the top of his voice:

"Police! police!" he yelled. "Fire! murder! help!"

"There, we're discovered," exclaimed one of the robbers. "Let's throw him over and run."

Guy's frantic appeal met with a prompt and most encouraging response—the rattle of a policeman's club on the pavement. It was given probably as a warning to the robbers that there was somebody coming, and they had better be making off if they wished to avoid arrest. They acted upon the friendly hint by releasing their prisoner and trying to run away; but he, being strong and determined, seized them both with the intention of preventing their escape, at the same time awakening a thousand echoes among the deserted warehouses by his lusty cries for help, in which he was ably seconded by Guy. The robbers finally succeeded in throwing off their victim's grasp, and one of them ran down the dock, while the other dodged into a door-way just as a policeman made his appearance around the corner.

"What's the matter here?" demanded the officer with becoming dignity and imperiousness. "Is this you, Mr. Heyward?" he added, peering sharply into the face of the rescued man. "What's all this row about?"

"Two men were trying to rob me," replied Mr. Heyward, feeling in his pockets to satisfy himself that his purse and watch were safe.

"Well, where are they now? Why didn't you hang onto them till I came?"

"I couldn't. They broke away from me and ran off."

"And one went that way and the other in there," said Guy, pointing with his right hand down the dock, and with his left toward the door-way into which one of the highwaymen had fled for concealment. "I saw them both."

The guardian of the night darted into the door-way, closely followed by Mr. Heyward, and presently Guy heard the sounds of a desperate fight going on in the

dark. But it was over in a few seconds, and the policeman and his assistant reappeared, dragging the robber between them.

"That's the man," said Guy. "I know him by his fur cap."

"Will you swear to him?" asked Mr. Heyward. "I think I recognize him; but, to tell the truth, he and his comrade assaulted me so unexpectedly, and kept me so busy, that I didn't have a chance to take a good look at either of them."

"Of course I'll swear to him," replied Guy. "I would know him anywhere."

"All right. I shall want you for a witness to-morrow. What is your name and where do you live?"

"I don't live anywhere. I'm a sailor," said Guy, who did not think it best to answer the first part of the question.

"Then I shall have to take you with me," said the policeman. "Come on."

"Where must I go?"

"Why, to the station, of course."

"To the watch-house!" exclaimed Guy, greatly amazed. "Oh, now, what must I go there for? I haven't been doing anything."

"I know it," said Mr. Heyward. "No one accuses you. But I intend to prosecute this ruffian to the full extent of the law, and you will be the principal witness against him—in fact, the only one whose evidence will amount to anything. In order to convict him I must have some one to swear positively that he is the man who attempted to rob me. I can't do it, and neither can the policeman."

"Come on, and don't waste any more words over it," commanded the officer.

Guy, whose courage had been completely frightened out of him by the scenes of violence he had witnessed, timidly obeyed. He fell in behind the officer and Mr. Heyward, who led the robber toward the police headquarters.

Guy had read in the papers that lodgings were sometimes furnished at watch-houses, and that night he learned what it meant. He found that those who were accommodated with quarters at the expense of the city were not provided with comfortable beds and private apartments, as they would have been had they put up at a first-class hotel. He was thrust into a room with a lot of homeless wanderers, and lay all night on the hard floor, with no covering, and nothing but his tarpaulin to serve as a pillow. How homesick he was, and how heartily he wished himself under his father's roof once more!

Very frequently, as he rolled about, trying to find a plank soft enough to sleep upon, he would raise himself upon his elbow, look around at the ragged, slumbering men by whom he was surrounded, and think of the neat little bedroom and soft, warm couch to which he had been accustomed at home. While brooding over his boyish troubles and trials he had never thought of the comforts and privileges that fell to his lot, but he thought of them now, when it was too late to enjoy them.

He passed a most miserable night, and was glad indeed when day began to dawn and the lodgers to disperse; but he was not allowed to leave the station, not even long enough to get his breakfast. He was kept under lock and key until ten o'clock, when Mr. Heyward's case came up for trial. When he was conducted into the court-room, which was packed with loungers and embryo lawyers, as justices' courts almost always are, he felt and looked more like a criminal than the hardened wretch who sat in the dock. He had never been in a court-room before, and he knew so little of the manner in which proceedings are conducted there that he was shown the witness-stand three different times before he could be made to comprehend that he was expected to occupy it.

"You seem to be very dull, young man," said the justice sharply. "What is your name?"

The tone of voice in which the question was propounded, accompanied as it was by a fierce frown on the judicial face, was enough to frighten away what few wits Guy had left about him. He did not know what reply to make. If he gave his own name it might go into the papers and be seen by everybody who knew him, and if he gave a fictitious one, the judge might find it out in some way and punish him.

"Witness, did you hear my question?" demanded the justice. "What is your name?"

"Guy Harris," answered the boy.

"Well, why couldn't you have said so at once and not kept me waiting so long? Swear him."

A red-faced gentleman, with a long nose and ruffled shirt, arose and mumbled a few words which Guy did not understand, and when he sat down, another, who proved to be a lawyer, took him in hand and went at him in a way that completed his discomfiture. He reminded Guy that he was on his oath, informed him that he should expect the truth and nothing but the truth from him, and ended his exordium by asking him where he lived—another question that Guy did not care to answer.

And it was so all through the examination. The lawyer insisted upon knowing all about matters that Guy wanted to keep to himself, and the consequence was that in less than five minutes he was completely wound up, and stammered, hesitated and blushed in a way that made everybody believe that he was not telling the truth. At the end of half an hour he was told that he might step down, and he was very glad to do it, for he was perspiring as if he had been engaged in some severe manual labor, trembling in every limb and so weak that he could scarcely remain upon his feet. He had seen quite enough of a court-room, and anxious to get out of it as soon as possible, began elbowing his way through the crowd toward Mr. Heyward, who was seated beside his lawyer.

I know I might make this part of my story more

interesting by saying that Mr. Heyward, who beyond all doubt owed his rescue entirely to Guy, was a rich merchant; that to show his gratitude to his preserver he took him home with him and dressed him like a gentleman; that he gave him a situation in his store, and that Guy was so smart and quick to learn that he became a full partner in two years and married the merchant's beautiful and only daughter, and that the merchant finally died and left him heir to two millions of dollars. That would be a grand way to wind up the career of our hero, but unfortunately he is a bad boy, and it is only the good ones whose lines fall in such pleasant places.

Guy had a very different future before him. Mr. Heyward did not even thank him for the service he had rendered, and Guy did not expect it. All he cared for was to get out of the court-room and that as quickly as possible.

"Are they through with me now?" he asked, when he reached Mr. Heyward's side.

"Yes, for the present," was the answer.

That was enough for Guy, who began crowding his way toward the door, paying little heed to the growling of those whose toes he trod upon or whose sides he jammed with his elbows. He breathed easier when he reached the street, and hurried away looking for a restaurant where he might find something to satisfy his appetite, for it was now twelve o'clock and he had had no breakfast.

"Thank goodness, I am out of there at last!" said he, wiping his dripping forehead, "and I'll never go near a place like it again if I can help it. If I see a fight going on, I'll run away and not stop to learn who comes out first best. How savagely that prisoner looked at me while I was giving my evidence! There was an expression in his eye which said, as plainly as words, 'I'll pay you for that some day, my boy!' I wonder what they are going to do with him anyhow?"

To explain what happened afterward it is necessary to answer this question. The prisoner was convicted on

Guy's evidence and held to bail to answer to a higher court for an assault with intent to commit robbery. Bail was speedily found by his friends, and the man was at liberty to go where he pleased until the following month, when his case would come up for trial.

As soon as this decision was rendered, Mr. Heyward, who was resolved that the robber should not escape punishment, began looking about for his witness, intending to have him locked up until the day of trial. But the boy was not to be found about the court-room, and a policeman was sent out to hunt him up.

The runaway little dreamed that he had a prospect before him of being shut up in jail for a whole month.

Guy found an eating-house at last, and entering, stood at the counter while he drank a cup of muddy coffee, ate a cold boiled egg and a ham sandwich, and thought over his prospects—or rather his want of them. He was alone in the world once more, for Flint, his only friend, was gone. He had not seen him since the fight at the boarding-house. Guy was afraid to go back there after him, or to get his luggage, and more than that, he was not certain that he could find his way there, even if he wanted to go. Of one thing he was satisfied, and that was, that if Flint was still alive and at liberty, the place to look for him was on the dock in the neighborhood of the shipping. Thither Guy accordingly bent his steps as soon as he had finished his breakfast.

CHAPTER XIII.

"JOHN THOMAS, A. B."

HEN he found his friend Flint, Guy did not know just what he would do. Probably he intended to be governed entirely by his advice, for he had already thought better of his resolution to return at once to Norwall.

It is true that he had seen the rough side of the world so far during his wanderings, but he believed that it had better things in store for him. At any rate he would find Flint and ask him if it hadn't. The sailor was so jolly and hopeful, and spoke so encouragingly whenever Guy told him of his troubles, that it was a pleasure to be in his company.

Guy spent an hour in unavailing search for his friend, but he discovered the Ossipee, which was discharging her cargo preparatory to going into the dry docks, and by taking her as a point of departure succeeded at last in finding the boarding-house at which he had eaten supper the night before.

He approached it with the utmost caution, momentarily expecting to come suddenly upon some signs of the terrible fracas that had taken place there a few hours ago, such as broken skulls, dissevered limbs, and lifeless bodies; but nothing of the kind was to be seen. The place was as quiet as the station-house he had just left, and Guy had half a mind to go in and ask for Flint, but hesitated when he thought of the landlord, with his fierce mustache and closely-cropped head. He did not want to see the landlord again, or that worthy might demand to know what he meant by running out of his house in that unceremonious manner and leaving his supper bill unpaid.

While Guy was wondering how he could answer such

a question without wounding the landlord's feelings, a hail came to him from the opposite side of the street.

"Halloo there! Hold on a minute!" exclaimed a voice.

Guy looked up and saw a stranger coming toward him. He was dressed in broadcloth, wore a shining plug hat on his head, and well-blacked boots on his feet; rings sparkled on his fingers, something that looked like a diamond glittered in his shirt bosom, and a heavy gold watch-chain dangled across his crimson waistcoat. Taken altogether he reminded Guy of the steward of the Queen of the Lakes. He approached with some eagerness in his manner, and as he came up thrust out his hand and greeted the boy with:

"Why, Jenkins, how are you? Glad to see you; when did you come in? Just been down to your ship looking for you. How are you, I say?"

The stranger smiled so good-naturedly, shook his hand so warmly, and appeared so delighted to see him, that Guy was rather taken aback. As soon as he could speak, he replied:

"I came in night before last in the schooner Ossipee from Chicago; but my name isn't Jenkins."

The stranger started, and looked at Guy a moment with an expression of great surprise on his face.

"Well, I declare, I have made a mistake—that's a fact!" said he. "But you look enough like Jenkins to be his brother. You see, he's a particular friend of mine, and I am always on the lookout to do him a neighborly turn. I wonder if you are as good a sailor as he is."

"I am a sailor," replied Guy.

"Of course you are. I can tell that by the cut of your jib."

These words went straight to Guy's heart, and vastly increased his importance in his own eyes. He straightened up, thrust his hands deep into his pockets, and took a few steps up and down the sidewalk, rolling from side to side as he had seen Flint do.

"Think I don't know a sailor man when I see him!"

exclaimed the stranger. "Why, I have been one myself. Take something warm this frosty morning?"

"No, sir," emphatically replied the boy, who had already seen enough of the evils of strong drink. "You don't get anything warm down me."

"Good resolution!" cried the man, giving Guy's hand another cordial shake, and slapping him familiarly on the back. "Stick to it. Do you know that that is one of the things that keeps you sailor men before the mast all your lives? It is the sober, intelligent ones, just such fellows as I see you are, who get to be mates and captains. Now, I can put you on a vessel where you will be pushed ahead as fast as you can stand it. You want a berth, don't you?"

"No, I don't," replied Guy. "I want to find my mate; and if I don't succeed, I am going home."

"Your mate!" exclaimed the stranger. "Oh, I know him—know him well. It's Jack a—Jack a——"

"No, it isn't Jack; it's Dick Flint."

"Why, so it is. How stupid in me to forget his name! I saw him with you yesterday, come to think. Let me see," added the stranger, placing his finger on his forehead and looking down at the ground in a brown study; "didn't I ship him last night on board the Santa Maria? Of course I did."

"Of course you didn't. He don't ship on no such vessel, and neither do I. She's got a crew aboard of her who don't sign articles," said Guy glibly, making use of some expressions he had heard at the boarding-house. "I don't want to ship with ghosts. I have seen too many of them in my time."

"Have you, though?" said the stranger. "I knew you were an old salt as soon as I put my eyes on you."

"Yes," said Guy, pushing his tarpaulin on one side of his head, thrusting his hands deeper into his pockets, and making a motion with his tongue as if he were turning a quid of tobacco in his mouth. "The last voyage I made was in a ship bound around the Cape. When the time came we began to get ready for bad weather by

sending down the royal-yards and masts, and taking in the flying jib-boom. One of the hands—my chum he was, too, and the best fellow and finest sailor that ever chewed biscuit—was out on the boom, and had just sung out 'haul in!' when a big sea broke over the vessel, and that was the last we ever saw of him—that is, alive. But every night after that when the mid-watch was called, and the order was given to haul in the flying jib-boom, we were sure to find that fellow out there before us, working like a trooper. No, sir; I don't ship in any more vessels that carry ghosts, if I know it."

Guy pushed his hat further on the side of his head, turned his back partly to the stranger and looked as wise as possible, thinking no doubt that he had made an impression on his auditor. He did not know that he had got his narrative somewhat mixed up, but that the stranger did was evident. There was a roguish twinkle in his eye, and he was obliged to bite his lips to keep from laughing outright. Controlling himself with an effort he leaned toward Guy and said, in a low, confidential tone:

"I don't blame you. The Santa Maria does bear a hard name, that's a fact, and I wouldn't sail in her myself. I've got another vessel on my books—the clipper Morning Light, bound up the Mediterranean, and I know that's the very place you want to go. Isn't it now, say?" he exclaimed, hitting the boy a back-handed slap on the chest.

"Yes," answered Guy. "I should like to go."

"Of course you would. Everybody wants to go, but only a few can get the chance. I tell you it takes influence to get a berth on board a Mediterranean trader," said the man, who knew that he could impose upon Guy to his heart's content. "Wealthy country that, and if you don't come back rich, it will be your own fault. Ostrich feathers are plenty and worth a hundred dollars a pound on this side of the Atlantic. Diamonds, pearls, nuggets, and gold-dust are to be had for the picking up. Everybody fills his pockets, from the captain

down to Jemmy Ducks. Come and put down your name. Where's your dunnage?"

"Hold on," said Guy, as the stranger seized his arm and tried to pull him away. "I want to find Flint, and see what he has to say about it."

"I know where he is, and can find him for you in less than ten minutes," said the stranger, who had about as clear an idea of Flint's whereabouts as Guy himself. "All I ask of you is to put down your name. Where's your dunnage?"

"I left it in there last night," said Guy, pointing toward the boarding-house.

"Why, the landlord didn't ship you, did he? That is, he didn't find a vessel for you?"

"No, I didn't give him a chance. They had a fight in there, and I ran away."

"A fight. Oh, that's nothing. It's all settled now, I'll warrant. Come with me. I'll get your dunnage for you."

Guy did not hesitate to enter the boarding-house under the protection of the stranger, and indeed he need not have been afraid to go in there alone.

There was but one man in the bar-room, and that was the second mate of the Santa Maria, who was probably on the lookout for a crew for his vessel.

"Morning, Rupert," said the stranger, as he and Guy entered; "I believe my young friend here left something with you last night."

"Ah, yes; here it is," replied the landlord, handing Guy's bundle over the counter and smiling pleasantly upon the boy. "What made you dig out in such a hurry? Did the fellows scare you?"

"Yes, they did," replied Guy.

"You need not have been alarmed. You were my guest, and of course I should have protected you. You see, Smith," added the landlord, turning to the shipping agent, "the boys had a bit of a blow-out here last night, and one or two of them came to a clinch. It was all over in a minute, and we took a few drinks all

around and made it up. It didn't amount to anything."

"I think it amounted to a good deal," said Guy, looking around at the walls where the plastering had been knocked off by the flying glasses. "It frightened me, I tell you. Where is Flint now?"

"Flint?" repeated the landlord interrogatively. "Do you mean the man who came here with you. "Oh, he's up-stairs with the rest, sleeping it off."

"I'd like to see him," said Guy.

"Of course you can, if you wish, but I wouldn't trouble him if I were you. Let him sleep. He'll be down to supper, and then you can talk to him."

"By the way," said Smith suddenly, "Flint has shipped aboard the Morning Light, hasn't he?"

Smith looked steadily at the landlord as he said this, and the landlord looked steadily at Smith. The two worthies evidently understood one another.

"Yes," was the landlord's reply. "He's signed articles, and got his advance fair and square."

"There, now," said the shipping agent, turning to Guy; "are you satisfied? Your mate has shipped aboard my vessel, and if you will come with me I will ship you. You'll see splendid times up the Mediterranean," he added, with a sly wink at the landlord.

"Finest country in the world," observed that gentleman.

"Such chances to make money," suggested the agent.

"Never saw the beat," said the landlord. "Been up there myself, and that's the way I got my start in the world. Went out cabin-boy, and came back sailing my own vessel."

"Do you hear that?" exclaimed the agent, triumphantly. "Didn't I tell you so? Come with me, and I'll put you in the way to make a man of yourself."

Before Guy could reply the agent assisted him to shoulder his bundle, and gently forcing him into the street, locked arms with him and led him away, talking rapidly all the while, and giving the boy no chance to

put in a word. In a few minutes more he found himself seated in a small, dark room, which the agent called his office; and the latter, having placed before him on the table a large sheet of ruled paper, which contained several names—taking care, however, to keep his hands spread out over the top of it—nodded his head toward a pen that was sticking in an inkstand close by, and told Guy to put down his name.

As the boy was about to comply it occurred to him that it might be a good plan to find out what sort of a paper it was that he was expected to sign. But just as he was on the point of asking some questions concerning it, he was checked by the thought that by such a proceeding he would show his ignorance, and beside, it would look too much as though he doubted his gentlemanly friend, the shipping agent. So he said nothing, signed a name to the paper, and was held for a voyage to—well, it was to some place a long way from the shores of the Mediterranean.

"John Thomas; that's all right. You are a good penman, and ought to be something better than a foremast hand. When your ship comes back to this port, if you don't tell me that you have made yourself rich by the voyage, and that you are at least a second mate, I shall be ashamed of you. Now, then," said the agent, laying his pocket-book on the table and taking the pen from the boy's hand, "what shall I put after your name —A. B.?"

"What's that?" asked Guy.

"Why, you're an able seaman, are you not!"

"No—that is, yes; of course I am. But I want to go as cabin-boy. I like that better."

"I can't ship you as cabin-boy; got one already. You will get more money by going before the mast, and you want to make all you can, don't you? I'll fix it for you."

The agent dipped his pen into the ink and wrote A. B. after the name Guy had signed, and Guy, ignoramus that he was, never tried to prevent him. If he could

make more money by going as an able seaman of course it was to his advantage to do it. That was the way he looked at the matter then, but before many hours had passed over his head he took a different view of it. He learned through much tribulation that honesty is the best policy one can pursue, even though he be a seafaring man.

The agent having prevailed upon Guy to sign articles, seemed on a sudden to lose all interest in him. It is true that after he paid him his advance he accompanied him to a store and assisted him in making some necessary additions to his outfit, but he hurried through the business, his every action indicating that he was impatient to be rid of Guy. When all the purchases had been made he took a hasty leave of the boy and told him to go to Rupert's boarding-house and stay there, holding himself in readiness to go aboard his vessel at six o'clock that night. If he was not on hand when he was wanted, he would find the police after him.

CHAPTER XIV.

SHIPPING A CREW.

"HUMPH!" said Guy to himself, as he shouldered his bundle and started toward Rupert's boarding-house, "there is no danger that I shall have the police after me. If Flint is going out in the Morning Light of course I must go too, for he is the only friend I have in the world, and I am bound to stick to him. I don't see what made that shipping agent grow so very cold and distant all of a sudden. I wish now, since he has shown himself so very independent, that I had examined that paper before I signed it. He was very polite until he got me to put down my name, and then he was almost ready to insult me. I can't imagine what need I shall have of all these thick clothes he made me buy," added Guy, as he shifted his heavy bundle from one shoulder to the other. "I thought it was warm up the Mediterranean. I knew he tried to fool me when he told me about the pearls and diamonds, but I don't care. I shall see something of the world and be my own master, and perhaps when I return I will have money enough to take me out to the Rocky Mountains. I haven't given up my idea of being a hunter, and I never shall."

Guy passed a dreary afternoon at the boarding-house, in spite of the friendly efforts of the landlord to make things pleasant for him. That gentleman talked incessantly and told wonderful stories about the rapid promotions and sudden fortunes that were sure to fall to the lot of everybody who was fortunate enough to go up the Mediterranean on the clipper-ship Morning Light. But Guy, green as he was, did not believe them. He did not care to talk either, for he was very lonely and wanted to see Flint. Contrary to the landlord's

promise, the sailor did not make his appearance at the supper table, the host accounting for his absence by telling Guy that Flint did not feel very well and wanted to sleep as long as he could.

"May I see him?" asked the boy.

"No, he doesn't want to be disturbed," was the reply. "I have just been to his room to tell him you were here, and he asked me to tell you to go aboard your vessel at six o'clock, and he will come as soon as he awakes."

Guy was not at all pleased with this arrangement. He did not believe that Flint had sent him any such instructions, and neither did he want to go away without seeing him. But he could not help himself, for at six o'clock precisely Smith, the shipping agent, appeared and ordered him to shoulder his bundle and come on.

The boy was obliged to obey. He followed the agent to the dock and into a yawl manned by two sailors, who immediately shoved off toward a vessel lying at anchor in the harbor.

Guy did not like the looks of her. If she was a clipper, he had hitherto had very erroneous ideas of marine architecture, he told himself. She looked more like the pictures he had seen of Dutch galliots.

When they reached her Guy followed the agent over the side, and one of the sailors threw his bundle up after him.

"Here's an A. B. I have brought you," said the agent, addressing himself to a man who came up to meet them.

"All right," was the reply. "What's his name?"

Guy started and looked sharply at the speaker. He was certain that he had seen him before. He was dressed like the man who had introduced himself to Flint as the second mate of the Santa Maria, and his voice was wonderfully like the mate's, too. Guy tried to get a glimpse of his face, but it was effectually concealed by a tarpaulin and a heavy woolen muffler.

"His name is John Thomas," said the agent, seeing that Guy did not answer the question.

"Take your dunnage into the forecastle, Thomas, and be ready to turn to at any moment," said the man.

"I declare, he's an officer," thought Guy, "and I really believe he's the second mate of the Santa Maria. If he is, how came he here on board the Morning Light? Dear me, I wish Flint would come."

"Good-by, Jack," said the agent, shaking the boy's hand. "I've got you into tidy quarters, and shall expect to hear a good report of you."

"What do you suppose keeps Flint?" asked Guy anxiously.

"I am sure I can't tell. I have nothing to do with him, you know. Rupert shipped him—I didn't. No doubt he'll be aboard directly. Good-by."

The agent disappeared over the side and Guy shouldered his dunnage and went down into the forecastle. Three or four of the bunks were already occupied, and, selecting one of the empty ones, Guy made up his bed in it, and then went on deck to look about him and await the arrival of Flint.

There were a few men on deck, the owners of the beds he had seen in the forecastle, but they did not notice Guy, and he was too much interested in his own affairs to have anything to say to them. Flint's absence was the source of great anxiety to him. He could not account for it, and neither could he explain the remarkable resemblance between the man who met him as he came over the side and the second mate of the Santa Maria, whom he had last seen in the public room of the boarding-house.

"Could it be possible," he asked himself—and at the thought the blood went rushing back upon his heart, leaving his face as pale as death itself—"that the agent had made a mistake and brought him to the Santa Maria instead of the Morning Light?"

"Great Cæsar!" thought Guy, catching his breath, "if that is the case I'm among the ghosts in spite of myself. I'll ask some of these men. Of course they know the name of the vessel."

As Guy was about to act upon this resolution his attention was attracted by the sound of oars, and running to the side he saw a large yawl approaching the ship.

His hopes arose wonderfully, but fell again when he discovered that there were but three men in the boat—two plying the oars and the other sitting in the stern with his hands on the tiller.

"Boat ahoy!" said the mate, leaning over the rail and speaking almost in a whisper.

"Rupert!" was the answer, given in the same cautious tone.

"All right," exclaimed the officer. "I thought you were never coming. Stand by there, one of you, to catch the painter. Cap'n," he added, thrusting his head down the companion way, "the boat's come."

Guy, being the nearest at hand, caught the painter as it came whirling up to him, and as he drew the boat up to the ladder that was quickly lowered over the side, he was surprised to see that she was loaded almost to the water's edge.

A number of bundles and chests were piled in the bow, and the bottom was covered with men—probably a dozen or fifteen of them in all—who appeared to be asleep. Of those who managed the yawl one was Rupert, the boarding-house keeper, and the others were two of his assistants, who had rushed into the bar-room to quell the fight, or rather to help it along.

Guy recognized them at once. He wondered what they were going to do with the men who were lying on the bottom of the boat, and was not long in finding out.

The men must have been slumbering heavily, for the landlord and his assistants made no effort to arouse them, but lifting them in their arms, one after the other, carried them up the ladder and laid them in a row on the deck, as if they had been dead men.

The last one who was brought over the side was Dick Flint, limp and lifeless like the rest. Guy was greatly horrified and disgusted to see his friend in such a condition. He had been almost twenty-four hours trying to

sleep off the effect of the "blow out" at which he had assisted. He must have been very drunk indeed.

"I wish to goodness I had stayed ashore," said Guy, almost ready to cry with vexation. "I don't want a drunkard for my companion, and I'll tell Flint so at the very first opportunity. I believe home is the best place for a boy after all. If he gets whipped and scolded sometimes when he doesn't deserve it, he always has plenty to eat, a good bed to sleep in, and isn't obliged to associate with such wretches as these. Halloo! what is the captain up to, I wonder?"

The men had all been carried to the deck by this time, and now a piece of iniquity was enacted that struck Guy dumb with amazement. The captain and his mate, accompanied by the boarding-house keeper, approached the place where the sailors were lying. The former held in his hands a pen and a roll of paper, which proved to be the shipping articles Guy had signed in the agent's office; the mate carried an inkstand and Rupert a lantern.

"What is this man's name?" asked the captain, stopping at the head of the row and pointing with his pen toward one of the prostrate sailors.

"Richard Flint," replied the landlord, "and he is an able seaman."

The captain wrote Flint's name and rate on the shipping articles, and then kneeling down beside him, placed the pen between his nerveless fingers, and seizing his hand in his own, described a cross with it upon the shipping articles. This done, the captain passed the pen over to his mate, who signed his own name opposite Flint's, and the latter stood on the shipping articles in this way:

his
RICHARD X FLINT, A. B.
mark

JACOB SCHWARTZ,
Second Mate, and witness to signature.

Although the whole proceeding was most outrageous, the form was according to law, and Flint, had he recovered his senses at that moment, would have been held for the cruise in spite of himself. Remonstrance would have been of no avail, and resistance would have rendered him liable to punishment.

But this was not all the wickedness that was perpetrated upon the unconscious seaman. While the mate was signing his name to the articles the captain produced his pocket-book and counted out forty dollars in bills, which he placed in Flint's hand, and closing his fingers over them, turned to the man who lay next to him, and whom he shipped and paid in the same manner.

Guy had been a puzzled witness of the whole proceedings, but now he thought he begun to understand it.

"I have been lied to and cheated," said he to himself. "Rupert and Smith both told me that Flint had signed articles and received his advance all fair and square; and if that was the truth, how does it come that he is being shipped and paid over again? I am afraid I have got myself into a scrape."

Guy did not know just what sort of a scrape he had got into, and he could not stop to think about it then, for another matter demanded his attention. He was interested in Flint's affairs, and knowing that the sailor could not take care of his money while he was in that condition, he started toward him, intending to take possession of it, and give it to him when he became sober; but what was his surprise to see Rupert step up to the insensible man, and coolly unclasping his fingers, put the money in his own pocket. In other words, he deliberately robbed Flint, and that, too, before the face and eyes of the captain and his mate, who, although they must have observed the act, did not pay the least attention to it. This was more than Guy could stand. He walked up to the captain and boldly charged Rupert with the theft.

"Captain," said he, "do you see what this landlord is

doing? He is stealing the advance as fast as you pay it to the men."

The result of this exposure of the boarding-house keeper was just what Guy might have looked for had he taken time to consider the matter before acting. He supposed, in his simplicity, that the landlord would turn pale and tremble, like the guilty wretch he was, and that the captain, after compelling him to return the money, would arrest him on the spot, or unceremoniously kick him off his vessel. But nothing of the kind happened. Rupert looked a little surprised, but only gave Guy one quick glance and held the lantern lower, so that the captain could see to sign another name. The latter, however, arose hastily, placed his pen between his teeth, and seizing Guy by the throat, choked him until he was black in the face; and then, with a strong push, sent him sprawling on deck.

"There, now," said he, "that's the first lesson; and if it don't learn you to keep a civil tongue in your head, and speak when you're spoken to, I'll give you another that'll sink deeper. Turn to and carry that dunnage into the forecastle."

The severe choking to which Guy had been subjected, and the jarring occasioned by his heavy fall on deck, had well-nigh proved too much for him. His head whirled about like a top, sparks of fire danced before his eyes, and his legs for the moment refused to support him. He was in no condition just then to carry heavy burdens, but he had heard the order and dared not disregard it. His last week's experience on board the Ossipee had taught him that instant obedience and unquestioning submission is the whole duty of a foremast hand. He is looked upon as a slave, a beast of burden, an unreasoning brute, who has no right to any desires, feelings, or will of his own. If he receives a blow from a handspike that would brain an ox, he has no business to become insensible or get sick over it, but must jump up at once and resume his work with cheerfulness and alacrity. Guy, however could not do this, for he had not yet been

sufficiently hardened. He pulled himself up by the fife-rail and clung to it several minutes before his head became steady, so that he could walk.

Was this the beginning of the "better times" which, according to Flint, he was to enjoy when once he was "fairly afloat?" Guy asked himself; and then seeing the captain looking his way, he released his hold on the fife-rail, and staggered toward the bundles belonging to the sailors, which lay where Rupert and his assistants had thrown them. With great difficulty, for he was still very weak, he raised one of them to his shoulder, and carrying it to the forecastle, threw it into one of the empty bunks.

As he was about to return to the deck he met two of the crew coming down the ladder carrying the insensible form of Dick Flint between them. They did not handle him very gently, but pitched him into one of the bunks as if he had been a log of wood, and laughed and passed some rough joke when his head came in contact with the hard boards.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourselves!" said Guy, indignantly. "This man is my friend, and too good a fellow to be jammed about in that way, even if he is drunk."

"Well, now, who are you that comes here giving orders and making yourself so free?" demanded one of the men, turning fiercely upon Guy.

"I am a sailor like yourself, and a better one than you dare ever be," retorted the runaway, little dreaming how soon he would be called upon to make good his boast.

"I ain't saying nothing against that," said the man, with a little more respect in his tones; "but I'd like to know what port you have sailed out of all your life that you can't tell the difference between a man that's drunk and one that's drugged!"

"Drugged!" exclaimed Guy, utterly confounded.

"Yes; that's what's the matter with your mate. The last glass he took was doctored. You might pound him to death with a belaying-pin and never hurt him."

"Drugged!" repeated Guy, some scraps of the conversation he had held with Flint at the boarding-house coming vividly to his mind. "What ship is this?" he asked suddenly.

"Why, didn't you sign articles?"

"Yes, but I'm afraid I've been cheated."

"No, I guess not," said the sailor. "You came aboard with a clear head on your shoulders, so you're all right."

But Guy was quite positive that he was *not* all right. He would have given a month's wages to know the name of the vessel he had shipped on, but dared not press the man to give a direct answer to his question, for fear that some strong suspicions that had suddenly arisen in his mind would be confirmed.

"I just know this is the Santa Maria," said the boy to himself, at the same time casting a quick glance around the dimly lighted forecastle. "I know it as well as I know that I am alive. Everything goes to prove it. In the first place the men Rupert brought here in his boat are the same ones I saw playing cards in his house. Flint predicted that they would all be drugged and shipped aboard the Santa Maria, and things have turned out just as he said they would. But how did Flint himself manage to be caught in the trap? That's what beats me. In the second place the mate, who witnessed the signatures on the shipping articles, is the same man I saw at Rupert's, and who said he was an officer of the Santa Maria. I know him in spite of his tarpaulin and woolen muffler, for he's got the same clothes on. Dear me! I wish Flint would wake up and tell me what to do."

While Guy's thoughts were running in this channel, he was working industriously at his task of carrying the sailors' bundles into the forecastle, and finally he found Flint's among them.

Hastily untying it, he took out two blankets, and rolling up one of them to serve as a pillow, he put it under his friend's head and spread the other over his

shoulders. As he was making his way up the ladder to bring down the last bundle, he heard the splashing of oars close by, and running to the side, saw a yawl approaching.

"Ship ahoy!" cried one of the men in the yawl.

"Halloo!" replied the mate.

"What ship is this?"

Guy listened with all his ears to hear the mate's reply, but the officer leaned as far over the rail as he could, and spoke in a tone so low that Guy could not catch his words.

"When are you going to sail?" asked the man in the yawl.

"Just as soon as we can haul up our mud-hook," replied the mate.

"Got your crew all aboard?"

"Yes."

"Have you one among your hands of the name of Guy Harris?"

"Merciful Heavens!" thought Guy. "Who in the world can that be, and what does he want of me? Is it the detective who arrested Bob Walker in Chicago? Great Scott!"

Guy did not wait to hear any more of the conversation, but hastily catching up the bundle, threw it over his shoulders and ran into the forecastle.

CHAPTER XV.

AN UNWELCOME DISCOVERY.

UY REMAINED in the forecastle just long enough to rid himself of his bundle, and then ran back up the ladder. Frightened as he was, he was possessed by an irresistible desire to learn who it was that wanted to see him. He intended to return to the deck and crouch down by the side, where he could hear what was said; but when he had ascended the ladder a few steps he heard the sound of voices near by, and saw that the occupants of the yawl had boarded the vessel. There were four of them, three were policemen and the other was Mr. Heyward. The latter held the shipping articles in his hand, and by the aid of Rupert's lantern was looking for Guy's name. The captain and his mate stood at a little distance looking on.

"The name don't seem to be on the list," said one of the officers, who was looking over Mr. Heyward's shoulder.

"I told you it wasn't!" growled the skipper. "If you ain't satisfied, search the ship. What has the man been doing, anyhow?"

"It isn't a man I am after, but a boy," said Mr. Heyward. "He is an important witness in a case I intend to bring before the courts next month."

"Who told you he was aboard my ship?" demanded the captain.

"No one. He slipped out of the court-room this morning before I knew it, and as he cannot be found about the city, it struck me he might be on board some vessel, for he is a sailor. If I find him I shall have him locked up. I am satisfied that he is not here," said Mr. Heyward, handing the shipping articles to the mate. "I am all ready, Mr. Officer, if you are."

"I want to ask the captain just one question before I go," answered the policeman. "How long has your vessel been lying here?"

"About four days."

"Have you kept a watch on board all the while?"

"Of course I have," replied the captain testily. "Do you think I am fool enough to leave a ship with a valuable cargo without a watch?"

"I merely asked for information. Those burglars who broke into that jewelry store night before last—you heard about it, didn't you?"

"Yes. Did they get anything?"

"They made a big haul. There is a heavy reward offered for them, but they have disappeared very mysteriously. We have positive proof that they have not left the city, and it may be that they have concealed themselves on some vessel which they have reason to believe is about to sail."

"If you think they are here you had better look around," said the captain. "I don't want any such passengers with me."

"Oh, if you have had a watch aboard your vessel all the time they could not have got here without your knowledge, so there's no use in searching the ship. Good-by, captain. I wish you a pleasant voyage."

Seeing that Mr. Heyward and his companions were about to go over the side, Guy ducked his head and beat a hasty retreat into the forecastle.

"Whew!" he panted, drawing his coat-sleeve across his forehead, "wasn't that a narrow escape? I don't think much of such laws as they have in this country, anyhow. I haven't done anything to be punished for, and yet Mr. Heyward, if he could have found me, would have had me locked up in jail for a whole month. It's lucky I didn't sign my right name to the articles."

Guy was aroused from his reverie by the sound of bustle and hurry on deck, and while he was wondering what it was all about he was summoned from his hiding-place by the hoarse voice of the second mate. When

he reached the deck he found that preparations were being made to get the ship under way. There were four sober men in the crew—those Guy had found on the vessel when he first came aboard—and Guy and the mate made six. There were fourteen sailors in the bunks below, so that the vessel's company, counting in the captain and leaving out the first officer, who for some reason or other had not yet made his appearance, numbered twenty-one men.

"Now, then, look alive," said the mate. "There's only a few of us to do this work to-night, but there'll be more in the morning. Here, Thomas, clap on to the standing part of that messenger, lead it aft, and make it fast to a ring-bolt on the starboard side."

Every word of this command was Greek to frightened and bewildered Guy, who stood looking about the deck undecided which way to turn. He had heard of "messenger-boys," but he did not know that there were any on board, unless he was one, and he couldn't see the use of leading himself aft and making himself fast to a ring-bolt, whatever that might be.

"Sir?" said he, as soon as he had collected himself so that he could speak.

"*Sir!*" echoed the mate with a terrific oath. "I spoke plainly enough, didn't I? Where's your ears?"

"They're on my head. But I don't see any messenger-boy."

"Messen—— Who said anything about a messenger-boy?" roared the mate. "What's this, you lubber?" he continued, picking up a rope which led from the place where they were standing through a block made fast to the cable and thence to the capstan. "What is it, I say? But look here, my hearty, didn't you ship for an able seaman?"

"Yes, I—no; no, I didn't."

"Yes, he did, Mr. Schwartz," said the captain, who had been a witness to the whole proceeding. "He did. Lay that messenger over his shoulders, and do it so smartly that he will know one the next time he sees it."

The mate swung one end of the heavy rope in the air, and Guy, with a piercing cry of terror, sprang away and took to his heels; but not in time to escape the blow. The rope fell across his shoulders with such crushing force that Guy wilted under it as if every bone in his body had been broken by the concussion. As he scrambled to his feet he was met by the captain.

"Go for'ard—don't come back here," said that officer, emphasizing his command with a push that once more made Guy measure his length on deck. "You don't belong here. Go for'ard, you lubber."

"Come here," said the mate, shaking his fist at Guy. "Come here and get a handspike."

Guy understood this order. He knew what a handspike was and what to do with it after he had got it. Dodging around the other side of the deck to avoid passing the mate, he found one of the implements, and shipping it into the capstan began heaving around with the rest, who were by this time at work hoisting the anchor. He kept one eye on the mate all the while, for he was afraid that he might have more punishment in store for him. And he had. When Guy came around within reach of him the officer suddenly lifted a short rope which he had kept concealed behind him, and rained the blows upon the boy's shoulders in a perfect shower. Guy endured it until he believed that the mate had determined to beat him to death, and then he dropped the capstan bar and run for his life.

"Come back here!" shouted the mate.

"Murder! murder!" screamed Guy, crouching close against the side, and holding both hands before his face.

"Yes, yes," said the officer, seizing him by the collar and throwing him back toward the capstan. "You'll sing that tune a good many times before you see the last of me. I'll learn you how to rate yourself the next time you ship."

"I didn't want to ship as able seaman," sobbed Guy, "but Smith——"

"Heave ahead, there!" interrupted the mate, again

raising the rope. "No back talk allowed here. I'm going to haze you beautiful."

That was a long and dreary night to Guy, and he scarcely knew how he lived through it. He did not understand a single order that was issued, and of course could lend no hand in the working of the vessel.

He did his best, fearing the rope's-end, but his clumsy efforts only got him deeper into trouble. The sailors swore at him and pushed him roughly out of the way, and the mate cuffed and kicked him every time he came within reach. Guy really thought he was doomed. He never expected to live to see the sun rise again.

The vessel was kept under way about three hours, and at twelve o'clock came to anchor under the lee of a high, wooded point which jutted out into the sea.

Guy drew a long breath of relief when he heard the cable rattling through the hawse-hole, and told himself that his labors and troubles were over for that night at least. But as usual he was disappointed.

The captain, not caring to go to sea short-handed, had stopped here to wait until his crew should become sober, and to perform some necessary work, such as getting on chafing gear, lashing spars and water-butts and stowing the boats. And Guy, with all the rest, was kept busy until half-past three o'clock, when he was ordered below to sleep until five. But he never once closed his eyes—he was in too much agony, both mentally and physically. He passed the hour and a half in rolling about in his bunk bemoaning his hard fate, and resolving over and over again that if he were spared to put his foot on shore once more he would never, as long as he lived, go within sight of salt water.

As the first gray streaks of dawn were seen in the east two men came down into the forecastle. Guy gave a start of surprise when his eyes rested on them, for he knew them both.

The first was the mate, of whom he had already learned to stand in abject fear, and he knew now what he had all along suspected—that he was the same man

whom he had met at the boarding-house. He recognized him in a moment, for his face was not concealed as it had been the night before. Guy wondered what evil genius had sent him aboard the Morning Light.

In regard to the identity of the mate's companion there was no sort of doubt in the boy's mind, although he took two good looks at him, and then rubbed his eyes and looked again before he was willing to credit the evidence of his senses. He knew those gray clothes and that mottled face and fur cap. He had seen them all in the court-room the day before. The man to whom they belonged was the robber against whom he had testified, and who had looked at him so savagely while he was giving his evidence.

This man, as the sequel proved, was the first mate of the vessel, who had left his bondsmen in the lurch. He had just come off in a shore boat, not having considered it safe to join the vessel while she was in the harbor, for fear there might be some one on the watch. Guy, of course, *knew* nothing of this, but having become very suspicious of late, he made a remarkably shrewd *guess* as to the real facts of the case.

A thrill of terror run through the boy's frame like a shock of electricity when he reflected that he was completely in this villain's power, and that if he felt disposed to take revenge on him for the evidence Guy had given against him he would have every opportunity to do it.

With a cautious movement Guy pulled the blanket over his head, leaving a little opening through which he could watch the movements of the two men. They had come down there to arouse the crew. They stepped up to one of the bunks and seizing the occupant by the shoulder shook him roughly.

"Halloo!" exclaimed the first mate, "this is one of our old hands, Jim Upham, and dead as a log yet."

"Yes," returned his companion with a chuckle, "and if he knows when he is well off he will stay that way as long as he can. I've a fine rod in pickle for him and

his mate yonder in the next bunk, for it was owing to them that we were four days in finding a crew."

The two officers proceeded to make the circuit of the forecastle, stopping at each bunk long enough to give the occupant a good sound shaking. The sober ones—those who had been on duty the night before—quickly responded, and as soon as they were dressed were ordered to rig the head-pump and get ready to wash down the deck; but the others—those who had been brought off in Rupert's yawl—could not be aroused. The effects of the drug, whatever it was, that the landlord had put into their "last glass," had not yet been slept off.

"Never mind," said the first mate, "if they don't come around directly we'll put them under the pump. Who's this?" he added, pulling the blankets off Guy's head.

"Oh, he's a young sneak who has come aboard to be hazed. He shipped for a sailor-man, and don't know a marlinspike from the starboard side of the vessel."

"Eh?" exclaimed the first mate, stepping back a little out of the light and bending over until his face almost touched Guy's, "haven't I seen this young—oh, he's a lubber, is he? Well, roll out and turn to."

The expression in the mate's eye and the tones of his voice indicated that he was about to say something else; but he recollected himself just in time. Guy knew that he had been on the point of referring to the scene in the court-room, and he was afraid that he might yet hear from the man concerning it, and at no distant day either. He did hear of it before a quarter of an hour had passed away. While he was busy at work washing the deck the first mate came up, handed him a swab, and under pretense of showing him where to use it, led him out of earshot of the sailors at the pump.

"I didn't think I should have a chance to square yards with you so soon, my lad," said he, with a savage emphasis. "Now I am going to make you think this ship is a frying-pan; and if I hear you lisp a word about what happened yesterday, *I will kill you.* Do you understand that? Answer me; do you understand it?"

"Yes, sir," Guy managed to reply.

"Well, bear it in mind, for it is gospel. I mean just what I say—no less."

Guy did not doubt it in the least. A man who carried a face like that of the mate was capable of any atrocity. Between him and the second officer it was very probable that the ship would be made a great deal warmer than a frying-pan. He knew that he was utterly defenseless, and that there was no possible way to avoid the punishment the mates intended to inflict upon him. The only thing he could do was to perform his duty to the best of his ability, and that too with the disheartening conviction all the while forcing itself upon his mind, that no matter how hard he tried, the officers would find some excuse for using a rope's end on him.

While Guy was busy with his swab, performing his work as well as he could see to do it through eyes blinded with tears, he happened to glance toward the forecastle and saw Flint slowly ascending the ladder. Guy could hardly believe that it was he. The sailor looked, as he afterward said he felt—"as dilapidated as a last year's bird's nest." His hair was disheveled, his face haggard and pale, his eyes blood-shot, and had he been seen in the woods just then, he would have been taken for a wild man. Never in his life had Guy seen such an expression of utter amazement and bewilderment as that which his friend's face wore as it arose slowly above the combings of the hatchway. Flint was lost, and it took him some time to get his bearings. He looked around the deck, and finally his eyes fell upon Guy.

"Halloo, mate!" said he, with a sickly smile and an abortive attempt to appear cheerful; "I knew you were somewhere about, for I couldn't think of anybody else who would put a blanket under my head for a pillow, and spread another over me to keep me warm. What ship is this?"

"The clipper Morning Light," said Guy. "You don't know how glad I am to see you in your sober senses again. I want to talk to you."

"Clipper be—blessed," said Flint, looking all around. That wasn't just the word he used, but it is as strong a one as we care to put in print. "Where are we bound?"

"Up the Mediterranean."

"Mediterranean be blessed!" said Flint again. "Liverpool or the Horn more likely. But, Jack, how did I get aboard, and when?"

"You came last night. The landlord—Rupert is his name—brought you and the rest off in a yawl, and you were as drunk as a beast," said Guy reproachfully, at the same time hoping that Flint could clear himself of the charge.

"No, I wasn't," answered the sailor emphatically. "You nor nobody else ever saw me drunk on a pint of brandy, and that's all I took."

"A pint!" cried Guy in surprise—"a whole pint?"

"Heavens and earth! what's the matter?" exclaimed Flint sharply. "I know to a drop how much I can stow away. I can sail on and never keel under a quart. I was doctored."

"But what made you touch it? You said you wouldn't."

"I know it, but I had to do it to settle the fight we got into. The landlord said if we'd take a drink all around he'd call it square, and we did. I tried to keep the others from falling into a trap, and fell into it myself. How did you come here, Jack?"

"I shipped aboard this vessel because I was told you had done so."

"What's your rate?"

"The agent put me down as an A. B.," said Guy hesitatingly.

"He did!" exclaimed Flint, opening his eyes in amazement. "Well, you are a soft Tommy, that's a fact. What made you let him do it? You've got yourself into hot water."

"I know it," replied Guy, with tears in his eyes. "I've been whipped a dozen times already, and the sec-

ond mate says he's going to haze me beautifully. What does that mean, Flint?"

"He says that, does he?" cried the sailor. "Then you had best jump over the side while you've got the chance. He's going to haze you, is he? That means that he won't let you have a minute's peace as long as this voyage lasts, and that you won't get a wink of sleep more than just enough to keep you alive. I pity you, my boy."

Guy thought he stood in need of sympathy. He knew that there were hard times before him, but he had never dreamed of anything so dreadful as this.

CHAPTER XVI.

STILL ANOTHER.

LINT looked at the boy for a moment with an expression of great concern on his haggard face, and continued:

"I was in a ship once when the whole crew was hazed, and I wouldn't go through it again for no money. It was awful."

"But why did you submit to it?" asked Guy, in surprise. "Were there not enough of you to whip the officers?"

"Yes, but that would have been mutiny; and if we had tried it we would have been shot down like dogs. There's no way out of the scrape, Jack, unless you go overboard. You're held as tight as if you were in jail."

"But I haven't yet told you all," said Guy, who seemed to find a gloomy satisfaction in talking about his troubles. "The first mate is an enemy of mine, too. You remember, do you not, that when you had the fight at the boarding-house I ran out? Well, I went to the dock, and there I found a man who was being robbed. I saved him by calling the police, and through me one of the robbers was captured. I was taken to the watch-house and locked up until the next morning, when I appeared as a witness against the prisoner; and who do you suppose he turned out to be? I was never more astonished in my life. Don't say a word about it, Flint, for he threatens to kill me if I lisp it, but it was our first mate. He says he is going to make me think this ship is a frying-pan."

"And he will keep his promise, too; you can bet high on that," said Flint, greatly amazed. "Have you told me the worst yet?"

"Yes, I think I have. Haven't I told you enough?"

"I should say so. I told you that a boy who goes to sea always gets more kicks than ha'pence, and now you find that I spoke the truth."

"But is there nothing I can do?" asked Guy anxiously.

"Nothing—nothing in the world. You must take your kicks and say not a word. One of these days, when you are an officer, you can take it out of the green hands who ship under you. That's your only chance to get even."

Flint, having offered Guy all the consolation in his power—and very poor consolation it was, too—now bethought him of his own troubles. Thrusting his hand under his shirt he drew out his "monk-bag"—a small leather purse which was suspended from his neck by a string. The last time he saw the purse it was well filled with bills and coin, but now it was empty.

"I have been eased of my wealth," said he. "Do you know what has become of it? I had eighty dollars in here, and never spent a cent of it."

"Is that gone, too?" exclaimed the boy, astonished at the calmness with which his friend announced the discovery of his loss. "I don't know any thing about it, but I do know where your advance went."

With this Guy begun, and hurriedly described the scene that had been enacted when Flint and his insensible companions were first brought on board, dwelling with much indignation on the fact that he had seen Rupert steal his friend's money, and had tried to make him give it up, but had only succeded in bringing down upon himself the wrath of the captain, who choked him until he could scarcely see.

When Guy finished, he looked at Flint, expecting that he would be very angry, and that he would at once seek the skipper and demand satisfaction for the manner in which he had been treated; but the sailor did nothing of the kind. He simply smiled, and said, with an effort to appear cheerful:

"I've seen that same trick done more'n once, but it

was never played upon me before, and never shall be again."

"But what are you going to do about it?" asked Guy.

"What *can* I do?"

"Why, arrest Rupert for robbery. I will be a witness against him."

"Ha!" laughed the sailor. "He'd bring a dozen men to prove that I owed him every cent of my advance, and more too. Besides, there's no telling where Rupert will be by the time our cruise is ended."

"But you need not go on this voyage. You were not legally shipped. You don't remember of signing articles, do you?"

"Of course not; but it will do no good to make a fuss about it, for the old man will say I had too much liquor in me when I did it to remember anything."

"Suppose he does. I have heard my father say that a note obtained from a person in a state of intoxication is not good in law, and the same principle ought to apply in this case."

"Well, it won't," said Flint. "Law was made for land-lubbers, not for sailors. Nobody cares for a sailor."

Guy begun to think so, too. It was utterly incomprehensible to him that men who had been kidnapped and robbed, as Flint and his companions had been, must put up with it, having no redress in law. He could not see why it was so.

Just then there was a movement in one of the bunks below, and presently a head appeared at the foot of the ladder. Another of the sailors had slept off the effects of the drug, and was coming up to see where he was. He was a man considerably older than Flint, and his hair and whiskers were as white as snow.

Guy's heart bled for him. That a man at his time of life should be treated worse than a brute, and be obliged to submit to it too, it was—— Guy's indignation got the better of him, and he could only wish that he could be the master of the vessel for an hour or two. Wouldn't he straighten out things in a hurry?

The old sailor came slowly up the ladder, taking no notice of Guy and his friend, and swept his eyes over the deck. No sooner had he done so than he started as if he had seen something frightful, took another good look, and his face turned ghastly pale.

"What ship is this?" he asked, backing down the ladder a step or two.

"The clipper Morning Light, bound up the Mediterranean," replied Guy.

"Morning Light be blessed!" said the old sailor. "I know her. She's the Santa Maria."

Guy's under jaw dropped, and the swab fell from his hand. His worst fears were confirmed.

He did not have time to digest this most unwelcome piece of news; for the second mate, thinking that he was devoting considerable time and attention to swabbing that particular part of the deck—for he had kept steadily at work during his conversation with Flint—came forward to see about it. He might have said or done something not altogether pleasant to Guy's feelings, had he not been diverted from his object by the discovery of the two sailors on the ladder.

"Well, my hearties, you have slept it off at last, have you?" he exclaimed. "Then tumble up and turn to."

Flint and the gray-headed sailor promptly obeyed the order, while the mate went into the forecastle to renew his efforts to arouse the sleepers.

This time he was successful. One by one the poor fellows came up the ladder, all of them, as Guy noticed, wearing the same expression of blank amazement which he had observed on Flint's face, and, seeming to understand their situation as well as if it had been explained to them, went to work without uttering a word of complaint.

As soon as the deck was washed down the ship was got under way, and, when studding-sails had been set alow and aloft, the men were mustered on deck and divided into watches. This done, the captain stepped before them and said, in a stentorian voice, as if he were hailing the mast-head:

"Now, men, we have shipped together for a long voyage, and whether or not it is to be a pleasant one depends entirely on yourselves. You all claim to be able seamen, and if you do your duty cheerfully and without any grumbling, you will find me the easiest ship-master you ever sailed under; but if there's any nonsense among you, I'll make this vessel the hottest place for you this side of——" Here the captain pointed with his finger toward the deck, indicating, no doubt, the regions below. "The rule of this ship is, the forenoon watch below, and all hands on deck in the afternoon; and if that regulation is changed, it will be your fault. Mark you, now: That gentleman, Mr. Evans, is my first mate, and that one there, Mr. Schwartz, is my second mate. I'm the captain; and when you have taken a good look at me, go for'rd. That's all I have to say to you."

"Go below, the watch," commanded the second mate.

Guy, Flint, the gray-headed sailor, and the others belonging to the port watch, lost no time in obeying the order. There were none among them who felt like doing duty. Guy certainly did not, for he was so completely exhausted that it did not seem possible he could live to draw another breath. He threw himself upon his hard bed, drew the blankets over his shoulders, and listened to the conversation of the sailors, who now had leisure to talk over their situation.

To Guy's great surprise there was not one of them who exhibited the least indignation, or had a harsh word to say against the author of their troubles. Some flung themselves helplessly upon their bunks as if it mattered little to them whether they ever got up again or not, others overhauled their bundles or chests to see if any of their dunnage was missing, and the faces of all wore a look of sadness and dejection that was painful to see. The furtive glances that they cast about the forecastle, and the listening attitudes they assumed whenever any unusual sound was heard, was enough to satisfy Guy that they were all aware that they had been shipped aboard the very vessel they had been most anxious to avoid.

"You needn't be a looking and a listening now, lads," said the gray-haired sailor, whose name was Upham, and who had made one voyage in the ship. "The Santa Maria is as quiet as old Davy's locker in the daytime, but wait until midnight, if the wind freshens a bit, then you'll hear something,"

"The creaking and groaning of the cordage, most likely," said Guy. "I've heard it often aboard the Ossipee."

"You'd better take a sheep-shank in that tongue of yours," said Upham sharply. "When you have sailed the blue water till your hair is as white as mine, you'll know more than you do now."

So saying the sailor drew the blankets over him, and with a sigh of resignation turned his face to the bulkhead and prepared to go to sleep. The rest of the watch, one after the other, followed his example, and Guy was left to commune with his own thoughts. He would have been glad to know just how and when the ghosts of the Santa Maria were accustomed to appear, so that he might be on the lookout for them; but Upham did not seem inclined to say more on the subject, and he had shown himself to be such a gruff, irritable old fellow that Guy did not care to ask him any questions, being certain of getting a sharp and unsatisfactory reply. While he was thinking about it he fell into a deep, untroubled slumber.

Guy that day learned by experience what "hazing" meant, and he found, too, that Flint's description of this mode of punishment was not in the least exaggerated. Long before night came he was so nearly exhausted that the fear of the rope's end, with which the second mate constantly threatened him, was the only thing that kept him moving.

It was his watch below from six to eight o'clock, but he was too tired to sleep, and the time was so short that he got very little rest. He was called on deck again at eight o'clock, and kept busy until midnight, for the wind which arose at sunset freshened rapidly, and on

several occasions it was found necessary to shorten sail. Of course Guy could lend no assistance in the execution of this work, but he bustled about in response to every order that was issued, and only succeeded in getting himself into trouble by his misdirected activity and zeal.

Once, when he was sent headlong against the rail by a push from an angry sailor, he clung to it for a moment with a half-formed resolution in his mind to jump into the waves which were tossing the vessel so widely about, and put an end to his misery at once, but prudence stepped in in time to prevent him from doing anything rash.

"The voyage can't last forever," thought Guy, trying hard to keep up his courage. "We must reach some port at last, and in less than half an hour after we are tied up to the wharf I shall be missing. I am going to desert. I have money enough in my pocket to keep me in food until I can find something to do. I'd rather be a wood-sawyer than a sailor."

Midnight came at last, and the starboard watch was called. Guy happened to be standing near the heel of the bowsprit as they came up the ladder, and he was astonished to see that every one of them was as white as a sheet. When they reached the deck they all cast suspicious glances back into the forecastle, as if they were afraid that there might be something following them. Beyond a doubt the ghosts had manifested themselves in some way. So thought Guy, and his opinion was confirmed by some whispered words he overheard.

"What is it, mate?" asked Flint of the sailor who was the first to reach the deck. "Your face is as white as a landsman's Sunday shirt."

"And maybe your face will be white, too, after you have been down there a few minutes," answered the man, who was the gray-haired sailor's crony, and who, like him, had made one voyage in the Santa Maria. "Where's Upham?"

"Here," replied the owner of that name. "Have you seen 'em?"

"No; but I've heard 'em. He'll be up directly."

"He! Who?" asked Flint uneasily.

"Why, the ghost of the man who was lost overboard a few years ago," said Upham. "You see, one night, during a gale, some of the crew were sent aloft to cut away the main topsail, for it was blowing too hard to furl it. One man was lost overboard—he was blown fairly off the foot-rope, they tell me—and every night after that his ghost used to get up on the main topsail yard and sing out: 'Stand from under!' I never heard him speak, but I've seen him often."

"So have I," said Upham's crony. "He looks like a rat."

"But what did you see in the forecastle?" asked Flint.

"Nothing; but we heard 'em talking and going on. They're in the hold now."

"Go below, you lubbers!" shouted the second mate. "This is the third time I have spoken to you, and if you don't pay some attention I'll start you down faster than you want to go."

The men belonging to the port watch ran quickly down the ladder to avoid the handspike which the officer began to swing about in close proximity to their heads.

Guy was the last to leave the deck. Tired and utterly discouraged as he was he would rather have spent the rest of the night in work than go into the forecastle. He scouted the idea of ghosts, but when such men as Flint and Upham showed signs of fear, he believed that it could not be without good reason, and that there must be something to be afraid of. He trembled violently, and his face was as pale as those of the rest of the watch.

"Aha! see him now, mates!" exclaimed the gray-headed sailor pointing to Guy as he came down the ladder. "Here's the chap that knows more'n all the rest of us put together!—a regular sea-lawyer. Now look at him!"

"Listen! listen!" said one of the watch suddenly.

The sailors all held their breath, and a silence deep as that of the grave reigned in the forecastle. This continued for a few seconds, and then a low, moaning sound, like the wail of some one in intense bodily agony, fell upon their ears with startling distinctness. It seemed to come to them through the bulk-head that separated the forecastle from the hold.

Guy listened in great amazement. The cold chills begun to creep all over him, and his face grew a shade paler than ever.

"Don't be afraid, my son," said Upham mockingly. "It's only the creaking and groaning of the rigging. You've heard it often, so it needn't scare you."

"No, it isn't the rigging," said Guy; "it's the boxes of freight rubbing against one another."

"Well, I never knew before that boxes of freight could talk," said one of the watch. "Just listen to that!"

"Oh, heavens! I can't stand it! I can't stand it!" came in muffled tones from the hold. "Take it off, or I shall die!"

This was followed by a low, murmuring sound, as of several persons in earnest conversation, and then all was still.

Guy's philosophy was not proof against such a manifestation as this. There was something in the hold beyond a doubt, and what else could it be but the ghostly crew the Santa Maria was supposed to carry?

"There's been awful things done aboard this craft," said Upham, shaking his gray head solemnly. "Nobody knows how many poor fellows have been knocked overboard on dark nights by them two mates."

"Great Scott!" soliloquized Guy, jumping into his bunk and drawing the blankets over his head. "I never thought of that. Who knows but that the first mate may be watching for a chance to knock me overboard?"

The old sailor's words had excited a train of serious reflections in Guy's mind. A man who could deliber-

ately attack another with the intention of robbing and throwing him into the harbor, would be none too good to make an end of the boy who had given evidence against him. There was but one thing he could do in his helpless situation, he told himself, and that was to watch the mate closely and be in readiness to seize the first opportunity to desert the vessel.

The night wore slowly away, and another miserable day dawned for the runaway. He was kept very busy, for the mates always found some work that he could do, but still he had leisure to observe that there was something unusual going on among the men. They gathered in little groups to converse when the officers were not looking at them, and Upham talked privately with every one of the crew, Guy alone excepted. He seemed to be urging some sort of a movement among the sailors, but what it was Guy could not find out, for no one, not even Flint, would enlighten him.

Was it a mutiny? Guy hoped it was, and placed a handspike where he could seize it at a moment's warning. If force were resorted to, he would get in at least a blow or two in return for the barbarous treatment to which he had been subjected.

Nothing was done until three o'clock, and then the captain came on deck as usual to smoke his after-dinner cigar. His appearance seemed to be the signal the sailors were waiting for. They dropped their work at once and, headed by Upham, marched aft in a body.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GHOSTS OF THE SANTA MARIA.

"HALLOO! what do you want here, you lubbers?" demanded the captain, as the sailors, headed by Upham, ranged themselves on the quarter-deck in front of him and took off their caps. "I don't allow any such doings as this aboard my ship. Go for'ard where you belong."

"We haven't come for any mischief, cap'n," said Upham, who had been chosen to do the talking for his companions. "We're all sailor men, and know our duty."

"Then go for'ard and do it," said the skipper angrily. "Away you go."

"We're ready to obey orders, cap'n, and you sha'n't have a word of fault to find with none of us, if you will only think up some way to git rid of them other fellows. It's more than human flesh and blood can stand to have them aboard here."

"What other fellows?"

"Why, them in the hold that keeps up such a wailing and groaning all the while."

"Get out o' this!" shouted the captain, looking about the deck as if he were searching for something to throw at Upham's head. "I've heard enough. You pulled the wool over the eyes of a lot of soft Tommys on shore and kept us waiting three days for a crew, but you can't talk any of your ghost stories into me. Go to your duty."

"We've done our duty since we've been aboard, cap'n," returned Upham, "and we're ready to keep on doing it if you will only get rid of that other crew, but not a tack or sheet do we touch till this thing has been looked into. We've all made up our minds to that."

"Oh, you're going to mutiny, are you?" roared the skipper, his face growing purple with fury. "I'll show you how I deal with such men. Mr. Schwartz, just step down into the cabin and bring up my pistols."

The second mate started in obedience to the order, but the sailors, who were drawn up in line across the deck, moved forward as one man, and stood between him and the companion-way.

Things were getting serious, and Guy, who stood on the outskirts of the crowd, began edging his way toward the bow. Was he going after his handspike? No; he intended to dodge into the forecastle, where he would be safe. If the captain was going to use fire-arms to bring his crew to their senses, he did not want to be found in the way of the bullets.

The skipper's actions indicated that he was in just the right humor to do something desperate. He stamped about the deck and swore at the top of his voice, but it was plain that, in spite of all his bluster, he was cowed by the bold front of his crew. When he paused to take breath, Upham spoke.

"We don't want to go agin yer, cap'n," said he, "and we don't want to talk no ghost stories into you, neither. All we ask of you is to come down into the forecastle and listen to 'em with your own ears. I've heard 'em, and I hain't a boy to be scared at nothing. I snuffed salt water before you ever saw daylight."

The captain seemed on the point of making an angry reply, but just then the second mate, after holding a short consultation with the first officer, stepped up and said something to him in a whisper. The sailors could not hear what it was, but they saw the skipper's face brighten at once.

"It may be possible," said he, aloud. "I did not think of that. Come on, men; I'll soon get at the bottom of the matter."

The captain led the way into the forecastle, and the sailors flocked down the ladder after him, Guy bringing up the rear.

"Now fetch on your ghosts," said the skipper, seating himself on one of the bunks.

"Avast heaving a minute, cap'n, and you'll see 'em," said Upham.

The silence that followed continued so long that the sailors began to get impatient, but not so the captain. The few words the second mate whispered in his ear had aroused some suspicions in his mind, and he was resolved that they should either be confirmed or entirely set at rest before he left the forecastle.

Ten minutes passed, and then the groans that had startled the crew the night before were distinctly heard, followed by the low murmur of conversation. The captain seemed very much annoyed. He arose from his seat, and placing his ear close against the bulkhead, stood there listening intently until the sounds ceased.

"They're there sure enough, cap'n," said Upham. "You see that we wasn't complaining of nothing."

"I am satisfied of it now," was the reply. "Get lanterns, a couple of you, and all the port watch come with me into the hold. Bring handspikes every mother's son of you."

"Handspikes won't do no good," growled Flint, after the captain had ascended from the forecastle.

"No," assented Upham. "I never yet heard of a ghost being knocked down and put in irons."

Judging by the expression on the faces of the sailors, there was not a man in the port watch who did not wish that somebody besides himself had been called upon to accompany the captain. The alarm that prevailed among them was contagious, and even Guy began to give way to it. He believed, with Flint and Upham, that there was something in the hold that could not be overcome with weapons, and when he went aft with his watch, armed like the rest with a handspike, he stationed himself at the heels of the captain with the determination to keep close to him. He had faith in the skipper's courage and prowess, and, moreover, he saw

that the latter carried pistols in his pockets. Pistols were better than handspikes any day, even in an encounter with ghosts.

In obedience to the orders of the mate, one of the hatches was opened, and the captain descended into the hold, followed by the port watch. Slowly they made their way along a narrow passage toward the place where the water-butts were stowed, and when they came within sight of them they stopped, astonished by the scene presented to their gaze. Some of the sailors took just one look, and then uttered exclamations of alarm and turned to retreat. Guy would have done the same, only he could not. He was so badly frightened that he could neither move nor speak.

A portion of the cargo had been broken out, forming a clear space about six feet square and as many feet deep, and in it were seated the objects that had excited his alarm—not ghosts, but living men, who held cocked pistols in their hands, and whose faces denoted that they were anything but pleased at the discovery of their hiding-place. In the center of this clear space was a fourth man, lying flat on his back, and pinned down by a box of goods which had doubtless been thrown upon him by the lurching of the vessel. The box was so large and heavy, and his companions had so little room to work in, that they had not been able to release him; and there the poor fellow had lain for long hours suffering intense agony, which was increased by every lurch the vessel gave. He it was who had given utterance to the groans which had so greatly alarmed the crew. The men, whoever they were, had come on board prepared for a long voyage, for they had brought with them a large bag of provisions, and had tapped one of the butts to get a supply of water.

"Well," said the captain, as soon as the volley of exclamations which arose from the sailors had subsided, so that he could make himself heard, "this thing has turned out just as I expected it would. You're the lads that robbed the jewelry store, I suppose."

"Why, so they are!" exclaimed Guy, who now comprehended the matter perfectly; "I knew they couldn't be ghosts."

"Who and what we are is no business of yours," answered one of the men gruffly.

"It isn't, 'eh?" exclaimed the captain. "I am master of this ship, if you only knew it. Come up out of that."

"No, we'll not go up, and if you know when you are well off you'll not come down to us, either. We are all armed, as you see, and the first man who makes a move to lay a hand on us will get a bullet through his head."

"Cap'n," said Flint, who was brave enough now that he knew they had live men and not dead ones to deal with, "just say the word and I'll jump down there and toss that fellow out before he knows what is the matter with him."

"No, no," said the captain. "Stay where you are. I know how to deal with 'em. Where are you lads going?" he added, holding one of the lanterns over the robbers' hiding-place and taking a good survey of it.

"We're going wherever the ship goes," was the surly reply.

"Well, you'll have a good long ride. This cargo will not be broken out under seven or eight months. Have you got provisions enough to last you that long?"

"You needn't lose no sleep in worrying about that."

"I won't, for it's your lookout, not mine. Hadn't you better let me rig a whip and hoist that box off that man? It's a pity to keep him in that fix."

"And after you get it hoisted off you would try to come some of your sailor tricks over us," said the robber. "We ain't quite so green as that. You just go off and attend to your own business. We'll take care of him."

"All right. Mark you now, my fine lads, I'm going to close and batten down my hatches, and they sha'n't be opened again until we reach port, no matter what

happens. If the ship goes to the bottom you go with her, and without a chance to save yourselves."

The skipper turned and crawled back toward the hatchway as he said this, and the watch followed him. They found their companions on deck impatiently awaiting their return, and when they heard what the captain had to say to his mates, and learned that the men in the hold were not ghosts, as they had supposed, but a gang of burglars, who, in spite of the vigilance of the watch, had succeeded in smuggling themselves on board before the ship left port, their surprise knew no bounds. Their faces, too, as well as the long, deep sighs which came up from their broad chests showed that their relief was fully as great as their astonishment.

Guy and the four men he had found on board the Santa Maria when he first joined her, knew more about the matter than anybody else, except the officers, they having been on deck while the policeman was talking with the captain about the burglars. They were obliged to repeat all they had heard over and over again, first to one and then to another, and Guy always wound up by declaring that that was the way all ghost stories turned out—they could be explained easily enough if people would only take the trouble to look into them.

"Avast there!" said Upham, who happened to overhear this last remark. "You ain't done with the old Santa Maria yet. You hain't seen the ghost who gets up on the main topsail-yard every night during a gale and says:

"Stand from under!"

By the time the hatches had all been closed and securely fastened, the captain came up out of his cabin, where he had been busy with his chart. A few rapid orders, which Guy, as usual, failed to comprehend, were issued, and the ship stood off on another course.

"The old man isn't letting grass grow under his feet," said Flint to Guy, as he came down out of the top. "He's going to get rid of them fellows."

"What is he going to do with them?" asked Guy.

"He's going to put 'em ashore. We're heading for some port now."

"Are we?" exclaimed Guy, highly delighted at this piece of news. "I wish we were there now," he added, sinking his voice to a whisper, and looking all about to make sure that there was no one within hearing. "You wouldn't see me in half an hour from this time. I am going to desert."

"And I don't blame you," said Flint.

"You will go with me, won't you?"

"What are you going to do?" asked the sailor; "find another ship?"

"No, sir," said Guy emphatically. "If I ever put my foot on the deck of another vessel as a foremast hand, I hope she will go to the bottom with me. I am going to stay ashore; you may depend upon that."

"Then I don't see what good it will do me to go with you, Jack. I'd have to ship again at once, for I've got no money, and I couldn't find any work to do ashore, not being a landsman. I might as well stay here. Now that I know we've got no ghosts aboard I shall like the Santa Maria as well as any other ship."

"Then I shall have to go alone, I suppose," said Guy. "I don't like to leave you, Flint, but I can't stand this any longer. I am black and blue all over from the poundings I have received."

"And you're getting as thin as the royal yard," said Flint. "You'll be bait for the crows if you stay aboard this craft till we reach the Sandwich Islands, and that's where we're bound."

"The Sandwich Islands!" repeated Guy. "I thought we were going up the Mediterranean."

"Oh, that's only one of the pack of lies that shipping agent told you," said the sailor, with a laugh. "If you had looked at the articles you signed, you would have found out all about it. We're going to discharge our cargo at San Francisco, take another from there to Honolulu, and fill up again for New Orleans. Where we shall go after that I don't know."

"We're going round the Horn, I suppose?"

"Of course. They don't take ships over the isthmus yet."

"Then I understand why Smith made me buy so many thick clothes. He said perhaps I'd see some cold weather."

"And so you will," said Flint. "I'll help you to get off if I can, but I don't see the use of going with you. I'd have to leave you again, unless you would go to sea in some other vessel."

"And that I'll never do. I'll starve on shore first."

"And I'll stay aboard the Santa Maria. Have you got any money?"

"Yes, I have sixty dollars and a little over. Do you want some of it?"

"No, I don't," said the sailor quickly. "I sha'n't need any while I am at sea, but you'll need it ashore. Here," he added, taking off his monk-bag and handing it to Guy, "keep this to remember me by. Put your money in it, and tie it around your neck, and you won't be likely to lose it. You can't take your bundle with you, of course, so when we reach port you had better put on another suit of clothes under those you've got on now, and stow away all the dunnage about you that you can without making yourself look too fat. If you put on too much you might as well try to leave the ship with a chest on your shoulder, for the mates will know in a minute what you're up to. They're posted in all sailor tricks. We sha'n't be long in port, so you had better be in a hurry. Whatever you do, don't be caught, or you'll sup sorrow with a spoon as big as a water-butt."

This made Guy open his eyes. He had not expected to find any serious obstacle in his way. If the ship came to anchor in the harbor to which they were bound, especially if they arrived there during the night, it would be but little trouble for him to drop overboard from the fore-chains and swim ashore, provided the distance were not too great; and if she were made fast to the dock, it would be still less trouble to leave her. But

now he knew that the officers would be on the watch, that they well understood every device that could be resorted to by deserters, and that if he were caught in the act of leaving the vessel, the treatment he had hitherto received would be mild in comparison with the punishment that would be inflicted upon him. The thought almost took Guy's breath away, but it did not discourage him. He had fully made up his mind to desert the vessel if it were within the bounds of possibility, and was not to be easily frightened from his purpose.

He conferred with Flint at every opportunity, and made all necessary preparations, selecting the clothes he intended to take with him, and tying them up in a separate bundle together with the "Boy Trappers," the book that belonged to Henry Stewart. This book Guy had carefully preserved. It was the only thing he had left of the hunting outfit which he had brought with him from home.

On the third day after the discovery of the robbers in the hold, land was in sight once more, and at nine o'clock in the evening the Santa Maria entered the port toward which the captain had shaped her course, and was made fast to the wharf.

Guy did not know what the name of the town was or what country it was in, and he did not think to inquire. All he cared for was to get safely off the vessel; he could get his bearings afterward.

As soon as the ship touched the dock the captain jumped ashore, and hurried away in the darkness—he was going after some officers to arrest the men in the hold, Flint said—and Guy ran into the forecastle to make ready for his attempt at desertion. He hastily pulled on the clothes he had selected, secured the "Boy Trappers" about his person, and having examined his monk-bag to make sure that his money was safe, presented himself before his friend, who nodded approvingly.

"It's all right," said the sailor. "You'll pass in the dark. Now stand here by the side, and I'll go aft and

keep an eye on the mates. When I see that they are not looking toward you, I'll cough this way—here Flint gave an illustration—and do you jump ashore, and run as if Old Nep was after you with his three-pronged pitchfork. I can't shake hands with you for fear they'll see me and suspect something; but you won't forget me, will you, Jack?"

"Never," replied Guy. "You have been very kind to me, and I wouldn't leave you under any other circumstances."

Flint, who did not care to prolong the interview, walked leisurely aft, and Guy leaned over the side and impatiently waited for the signal.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON SHORE AGAIN.

FOR TEN minutes—it seemed an hour to him—Guy stood there with his hands on the side waiting for the signal which was to tell him that the moment had arrived for him to make a strike for his liberty; but Flint did not give it.

Guy began to get impatient. He looked about the deck, but although the crew were in sight, none of them seemed to be paying any attention to him or his movements. The first mate was standing at the head of the companion ladder, gazing toward the light-house at the entrance of the harbor, and the second mate, the one he most feared, was nowhere to be seen. But for all that, he was close by, and on the watch, too. Flint saw him, and that was the reason he did not give the signal for which Guy was so impatiently waiting.

The vigilant officer, who seemed to see everything that took place on board the vessel, knew Guy's plans as well as he knew them himself, for he had crouched at the head of the ladder and looked down into the forecastle while Guy was preparing for his attempt at escape.

The mate's first thought was to seize him as he came on deck and shake him out of his superfluous clothing; but after a little reflection he decided to adopt another mode of punishment. He would wait until Guy was about to leave the ship and then give him a lesson that he would remember as long as he lived.

As Flint turned away after taking leave of his young friend, he saw the mate crouching behind the long boat, holding in his hand a stick of wood which he had caught up as he passed the galley.

The sailor knew in an instant why he was there, and would have turned back to warn Guy, but the

officer, divining his intention, made an impatient gesture with his hand, and Flint was obliged to pass on.

Guy waited and listened, growing more and more impatient, until at last he could no longer control himself. The wharf was almost within reach of him, and if his feet were once firmly planted upon it, his escape could be easily accomplished. A few quick bounds would carry him out of sight in the darkness, and if he were followed, he could creep into some alley or door-way and remain there until the danger was past. He resolved to try it.

He put one leg over the rail, paused an instant to make sure that the movement had not attracted attention, then threw the other over, and lowered himself slowly toward the wharf. His feet had almost touched it, and Guy was already congratulating himself on his escape, when a stick of stove-wood, propelled with all the force of a sinewy arm, whistled through the air, and striking the rail within an inch of his head, bounded off, and fell into the water. Had it struck him, as the mate fully intended it should when he sent it flying from his hand, it would have knocked him senseless.

While Guy was looking all around to see where the missile came from, the officer arose from his concealment and showed himself.

"That was a pretty good shot," said he, "but the next one will come closer than that. Crawl back, you lubber. Now," he added, as the boy tremblingly obeyed, "go below, and stay there till I call you."

As Guy started off in obedience to the order, the mate hastened his movements by aiming a blow at him with his fist, and following it up by a vicious kick with his heavy boot; but the boy, having learned to be always on the lookout for these favors, nimbly eluded them both.

"I wish I were a man for a few minutes," thought Guy, as he ran down the ladder into the forecastle and began pulling off his extra clothing; "I'd settle with you, Mr. Schwartz, and pay you back in your own coin. I've failed once, but I'll not fail the next time I try it.

I'll have more time at San Francisco, for Flint says we're going to discharge our cargo there. Perhaps it is just as well, after all," he added, determined to look on the bright side, if there was any, "because when I reach San Francisco I shall be but a short distance from the Rocky Mountains, and can begin the life of a hunter as soon as I please. Don't I wish I was there now with a good horse and gun, and such a dog as the boy trappers had? Never mind, I'll have them one of these days, if I only live to get off this vessel."

About the time Guy was ordered below by the second mate, the captain returned, accompanied by three or four policemen. Guy heard them open the hatch and go into the hold, and remembering that the robbers had promised to make a desperate resistance, he listened to their movements with no little anxiety, momentarily expecting to hear the sounds of a fierce struggle going on among the freight, but nothing of the kind happened.

The sight of the locusts and badges borne by the officers of the law took all the courage out of the burglars, who quietly passed up their weapons and allowed handcuffs to be slipped on their wrists. The box was then hoisted off the other burglar, and he was placed upon a stretcher and carried ashore. It was all done in five minutes, and when Guy was ordered on deck to assist in getting the vessel under way—or rather to stand by and look on while the others did it—the policemen and their prisoners had disappeared in the darkness.

This was the last incident worthy of record that happened while Guy remained on board the Santa Maria. Nothing occurred to break the monotony of the voyage, which continued two hundred and ten days, and which our runaway afterward looked back upon as the dreariest part of his existence.

With the robbers disappeared all traces of that "other crew" of which the sailors stood so much in fear. The most superstitious among them kept a close watch for a few nights, starting at every unusual sound; and when the wind freshened during the mid-watch, casting

anxious glances toward the main-topsail yard, where the ghost who shouted "Stand from under!" was accustomed to station himself. But nothing startling was ever seen or heard, and the men finally ceased to speak or think of the matter.

Flint came in for some slight punishment for assisting Guy in his attempt to desert the vessel, and Upham and his crony were hazed for a day or two for keeping the ship waiting in port for a crew; but the mate's ill-will seemed to wear itself out at last, and then things went on smoothly with everybody except the runaway.

Mr. Schwartz could not forget that Guy had tried to impose upon him by rating himself as able seaman, when he scarcely knew the maintruck from the kelson, and he did not intend that Guy should forget it either. He never allowed him a moment's peace while he was on duty, and sometimes, when he felt particularly vindictive, he would keep him on deck long after the rest of the watch had gone below. Guy's life almost became a burden to him. The only pleasure he found was in looking at the pictures in the "Boy Trappers," and dreaming of the easy, glorious existence he would lead when once he became a hunter.

When he tumbled into his bunk he would lie awake for hours building his gorgeous air-castles. Under the influence of his lively imagination the walls of his dingy quarters would seem to widen out and loom up until they became lofty, snow-capped mountains; the dreary forecastle, smelling of tar and bilge-water, would become a beautiful glade decked with flowers and embowered with trees; the smoky lantern would grow into a cheerful camp-fire; the weather-beaten walls would change into tall, broad-shouldered hunters and trappers; the chests, which were ranged on one side of the forecastle, would take the shape of horses staked out to graze; and the clothing hanging about would be transformed into buffalo humps and juicy haunches of venison.

Then Guy would imagine himself stretched out on

his blanket among these wild, congenial spirits, wearing a coonskin cap and dressed in a full suit of buckskin, gaudily ornamented (he couldn't be a full-fledged hunter without a coonskin cap and a suit of buckskin, especially the latter, which, according to the cheap novels he had read, always set off the wearer's "slender, well-knit frame to such good advantage"), his "deadly rifle, with which he could drive a nail or snuff a candle at sixty yards' distance," lying by his side; his tomahawk, hunting-knife and lasso hanging from a tree over his head, his fierce wolf-dog that could pull down a buck or throttle an Indian with all ease, reposing at his feet, and his horse, an animal which had carried him safely through many a desperate fight with savages and wild beasts, and which for speed and endurance was never equaled, grazing a little apart from the others and rendered conspicuous by his great size and exceeding beauty.

"And suppose this horse was the celebrated white pacer of the plains," soliloquized Guy, carried fairly up to the seventh heaven of happiness by his wild dreamings; "a horse that no living man had ever ridden until I caught him with my own lasso and tamed him with my own hands! Ah! And suppose these men were government scouts and I was the chief of them? 'The Boy Chief of the Rough Riders of the Rocky Mountains!' Whew! Wouldn't that be a sounding title, though? Oh, I'm bound to make myself famous before I am ten years older. Dear me, I wonder if this miserable vessel will ever reach San Francisco?"

When Guy dropped to sleep at last it would be to revel in such scenes as this, until the hoarse voice of the second mate brought him back to the realities of earth again. He lived in this way just seven months—how careful he was to count the days as they dragged slowly by—and when at last he was beginning to despair and to believe that the voyage never would have an end, Flint one day pointed out something in the horizon which looked like a cloud, but which he said was land, adding that he had heard the first mate say that if they

had no bad luck they would pass the Golden Gate in about three days.

Guy had been waiting most impatiently for this announcement, and now he could not have told whether he was glad or sorry to hear it. He longed to feel the solid ground under his feet once more, but there was an obstacle in the way of his getting there that he dreaded to encounter.

That was the second mate, whose eyes followed every move he made while he was on deck. Since he detected the boy in his attempt to desert the vessel, the officer had been more brutal than he was before; and he had promised, too, that if he caught Guy in any more tricks of that kind he would knock him overboard the very first good chance he got.

Guy believed that the mate fully intended to carry it out. Flint thought so, too, and advised extreme caution. He and Guy held many a long consultation, but could decide upon no definite plan of operations. The only thing the boy could do was to be governed by circumstances, and this time be careful not to act in too great a hurry.

On the afternoon of the fourth day after land was discovered the Santa Maria entered the harbor of San Francisco and came to anchor, where she was to remain a day or two—so Guy heard—before she was hauled into the wharf. No sooner had she swung round to her anchor than one of the boats was put into the water, and when it had been manned the captain came on deck carrying a basket on his arm.

"Pass the word for Thomas," said he.

Guy heard the call, and was hurrying aft in response to it when he was met by the second mate.

"Look here, my hearty," said the officer, "you're to go ashore to carry the captain's basket. But listen now—no nonsense. I know every hole and corner in 'Frisco, and if you don't come back with the old man I'll be after you with a sharp stick, and if I catch you—well, you know me."

The mate finished with a peculiar nod of his head, which had a peculiar meaning in it.

Guy picked up the captain's basket in obedience to a gesture from that gentleman, and followed him into the boat. His mind was in such a whirl of excitement and uncertainty that he took no note of what was going on around him. Here was a chance for liberty, but he did not know whether to improve it or not. He had nothing with him except his money, and that he always carried in his monk-bag, which was slung around his neck. The blankets and extra clothing which he would probably need before he could have time to earn others, were in his bundle in the forecastle, and so was that book of Henry Stewart's, which was to him what chart and compass are to the mariner.

Guy set great store by that book. It would, he thought, be of as much service to him as the blankets and extra clothing, for he knew nothing about hunting and trapping; in fact, he had never fired a gun half a dozen times in his life, and he could make but poor headway until he had received instructions from some source.

Having no mind of his own and knowing next to nothing outside of school books, he had leaned upon somebody ever since he had been away from home—Bob Walker first, and then Flint—and he had expected when he left the vessel to have the book for a counselor. It told how to build camps, how to cook squirrels and venison on spits before the fire, how to travel through the thickest woods without the aid of a compass or the sun, and how he ought to conduct himself in all sorts of terrible emergencies, such as fights with Indians and grizzly bears. It would be a rather risky piece of business for him to depend on his own judgment and resources, and it would be equally risky to wait for another opportunity to desert, for it might never be presented.

Guy did not know what to do, and there was no one to whom he could go for advice.

"Thomas, you stay here till I come."

These words aroused Guy from his reverie. He

looked up and found himself standing at the foot of a long, wide stairway leading up into a building which looked like a warehouse. The Santa Maria was hidden from his view by the masts and rigging of the vessels lying at the wharf, the boat in which he had come ashore was out of sight, and so was the captain, who went quickly up the stairs and disappeared through a door, which he slammed behind him. Now or never was the thought that passed through Guy's mind, and without stopping to dwell upon it an instant, he dropped the basket and darted away as fast as his legs could carry him, turning down every street he came to, and putting as many corners as possible between himself and the harbor.

Guy had learned at least one thing during the eight or nine months he had been on the water, and that was that in all seaport towns the sailors' quarters are located near the docks, hence his desire to leave that part of the city behind him in the shortest possible space of time. He never wanted to meet a seafaring man again—he had learned to despise the name as well as the calling. Besides, he knew that if the second mate fulfilled his threat of searching the city for him, that part of it to which the sailors most resorted would be the very first place he would visit. Guy wondered if there was a hunters' boarding-house in town. The officer would never think of looking for him there.

The deserter made remarkably good time for a boy who had been worn almost to a shadow of his former self by hard fare and harder treatment, settling down in a rapid walk at intervals, and then breaking into a run again when he reached a street in which there were but few people to observe his movements, and was finally brought to a stand-still by a sign which caught his eye—J. Brown, gunsmith.

The words drove all thoughts of the mate out of his mind, and suggested to him a new train of reflections. He was out of danger for the present—he had been running fully half an hour, as nearly as he could guess at the

time—and had leisure to ponder upon a question which just then arose in his mind. Here was a chance to provide himself with as much of a hunter's outfit as his limited supply of money would purchase. Should he improve it, or wait until some future day? It was a matter that could not be decided on the spur of the moment, so Guy seated himself on a dry-goods box in front of a store opposite the gunsmith's, and thought about it.

After he had recovered a little of his wind, and got his brain in working order, Guy walked across the street and looked in at the gunsmith's window. He saw there everything a hunter could possibly need—rifles, shotguns, hunting-knives, revolvers, game-bags, traps, and fishing-tackle—such a variety, in fact, that Guy could not at once make up his mind what he wanted most. The window on the other side of the door was filled with saddles, bridles, blankets, spurs and ponchos. As Guy looked at them a second question arose in his mind.

"Now, how am I going to get my horse?" he asked himself. "I must have one, for I never heard of a hunter traveling about on foot. It wouldn't look well. Besides, what if I should happen to get into a fight with Indians or grizzly bears? Why, I'd be rubbed out sure. And if I can think up some way to get a horse, how am I going to earn the money to buy a saddle and bridle for him? Great Scott! there's always some drawback to my plans."

And this seemed to be a serious drawback, too. Whenever Guy had indulged in his day-dreams, he had always imagined himself a prosperous and famous hunter, with all the comforts and luxuries of his calling at his command. The question had sometimes forced itself upon his mind, how was he to get all these things? But it was always an unwelcome one, and was dismissed with the comforting reflection that it would be time enough to worry about such little matters when he stood in need of them. That was the way he disposed of the horse question now.

"I'll get my gun and other things I need, and think

about a horse some other time," he thought. "Perhaps I can buy one already trained from some friendly Indian for a plug or two of tobacco; and, by the way, I guess I had better get some tobacco for that purpose. Or, I may find a hunting-ground so well stocked with game that I can trap and shoot enough beaver and otter in a few days to pay for a good horse. But the mischief of it is, I don't know how to hunt and trap those animals, and there's that book I need so much on board the Santa Maria. No matter, I'll wiggle through some way. What I want just now is a shooting-iron."

So saying, Guy opened the door and went into the gun-shop.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RANCHMAN.

'D LIKE to look at a rifle," said Guy to the gunsmith, who came up behind the counter to attend to his wants.

"Something pretty nice?" asked the man.

"No, sir. I can't afford anything fancy."

"You want a squirrel-rifle, I suppose?"

"No, I don't," replied Guy. "I don't waste time on such small game. I want one carrying a ball large enough to knock over a buffalo or a grizzly bear."

"Oh!" said the gunsmith. He looked curiously at Guy for a moment, and then opening a glass door behind him, took out a plainly finished rifle, and handed it over the counter. "There's one carrying fifty to the pound," said he, "and I'll warrant it to shoot two hundred yards with accuracy. Only fifteen dollars."

Guy took the weapon, and it was so much heavier than he expected to find it that he came very near dropping it on the floor.

The gunsmith said it weighed twelve pounds, but his customer thought he meant to say forty, for when he lifted it to his shoulder and glanced along the barrel as if he were taking aim at something, it was all he could do to hold it, and the muzzle "wobbled" about so violently that it was doubtful if he could have hit the side of a barn at twenty paces. He noticed, too, that the weapon was provided with two triggers and two sights, and he did not see what use they could possibly be; but of course he could not ask questions without showing his ignorance.

"I want something I can depend upon in any emergency," said Guy after he had looked the rifle over with an air of profound wisdom. "A man who follows

the business of a hunter sometimes finds himself in a tight place."

"Why, I thought you were a sailor," said the gunsmith. "You look like one."

"A sailor!" repeated Guy contemptuously. "Well, I have been, that's a fact," he added, suddenly recollecting that he had not yet donned his coonskin cap and suit of buckskin; "but I'm a hunter now. Did you never hear of the Wild Rough Riders of the Rocky Mountains?"

This was the name Guy intended to give to his band when he got it organized, and he thought he might as well begin to let people hear of it.

"No," said the man, looking at Guy as if he were on the point of laughing outright, "I never did."

"Well, I am one of them, and I want a good rifle."

"This is a weapon I can recommend," said the gunsmith. "Here are the molds that go with it. You can see that it carries a large ball. If a bear gets one of them in his head, it will be the last of him."

"I'll take it," said Guy. "Now I want some other things to go with it."

The gunsmith, who was all attention, handed out the other articles as Guy called for them—a game-bag, a powder-horn (which he filled with rifle-powder), a box of caps, a hunting-knife, two pounds of bullets to fit the rifle, as many pounds of bar lead and a ladle to melt it in, and also a poncho and a Mexican blanket, which he tied up in a bundle so that Guy could carry them over his shoulder. The trading was all done in twenty minutes, and when Guy walked out of the store he had thirty-five dollars less in his purse, and his first hunter's outfit on his back.

"Now I begin to feel like somebody," thought the boy, as he lifted his rifle to his shoulder and hurried down the road. "Mr. Schwartz has laid a rope's end over my back for the last time. Don't I wish I could see him just now? I'd show him how we rough riders are going to clean out the Indians. I'll turn into the

first hotel I find, get a square meal, and go to bed, knowing that there'll be no one to awaken me with, 'All you port watch, ahoy! Roll out lively, Thomas, or I'll be down there after you.' But after to-night I shall live in the open air altogether. I wish I had a horse. Those mountains seem a long way off. I shall find my first hunting-grounds among them."

Guy trudged along the dusty road for the next two hours indulging in such thoughts as these, and very pleasant traveling companions he found them. Now and then he would be aroused by the sound of wheels, when he would wake up long enough to step out of the way of some passing vehicle, and then he would go on with his dreaming again.

At last he found what he was in search of—a hotel, the existence of which was made known to him by a faded sign swinging from the top of a high post, and which conveyed to those who passed that way the information that entertainment for man and beast was there furnished by Tom Davis. The hotel itself was a weather-beaten, tumble-down sort of a building, and was better calculated to repel than to attract customers; but Guy did not stop to look at it. If it could furnish him with plenty to eat and a bed to sleep in, that was all he cared for.

Attracted by the sound of voices, he turned the corner of the building where the principal entrance seemed to be, and found himself in the presence of a dozen or more men who were congregated on the porch, some lounging on benches, and others sitting with their chairs tipped back against the side of the house and their feet elevated on the rounds. They were all taking loudly, and the appearance and actions of some of them indicated that they had had something besides water to drink. They raised their eyes as the boy appeared among them, and after giving him a good looking over, went on with their conversation.

The landlord was among them, and he made himself known to Guy by pointing with his thumb over his

shoulder toward the open door—an invitation for him to enter and make himself at home. At any rate Guy took it as such and acted upon it. In the bar-room he found another rough-looking individual, who relieved him of his rifle and pack and asked what he could do for him.

"I want a room and something to eat," said Guy.

"I don't know how it'll be about a room," replied the man. "We're pretty full—we always are—but I can give you a shake-down somewhere. Grub is plenty, and you look as though you needed a good tuck-out."

"So I do," said Guy. "I am almost starved to death. I haven't eaten anything but salt horse and hard-tack for the last seven months."

The man showed some curiosity to know where Guy had been that he was obliged to live on such fare, and the latter told him as much of his history as he cared to have him know. He did not tell him, however, where he was going and what he intended to do, for fear the man might laugh at him. He had a suspicion that the gunsmith laughed at him when he was buying his outfit. Indeed, everybody who knew that he wanted to be a hunter thought the notion a wild one—they looked it if they did not say it—and Guy could not bear to have his grand idea made sport of.

Guy passed a comfortable night at the hotel in spite of its unpromising exterior, enjoyed a good sleep, which was something he really needed, ate a hearty breakfast the next morning, and felt more like himself than he had felt for many a long day. Having settled his bill he stood for a moment on the porch with his rifle in his hand and his pack over his shoulder, looking down the long, straight road before him and wondering how many steps it would take to bring him to his hunting-grounds, when he was accosted by one of the guests of the house who sat on a heavily loaded wagon with his whip and reins in his hand.

"I say, stranger, if you're travelin' my way, you might as well get up an' ride," said he.

"Are you going to the mountains?" asked Guy.

"Wal, I'm goin' down to the San Joaquin."

"Is there any hunting there?"

"Huntin'! Now you're talkin'. Thar's bars an' antelope till you can't rest."

"Then that's the place I'm looking for, and I'll ride."

So saying Guy handed up his rifle and pack and mounted beside the man, who cracked his whip and drove off.

Mr. Wilson, for that was the man's name, was an old miner, having immigrated in '49. Like many others of his class, he believed that California was completely "petered out," now that the placer diggings had failed, and he had taken to farming, not because he liked it or it was a profitable business, but because he had to do something for a living, and nothing else offered. He did not own an acre of land, but he raised any number of fine horses and cattle for market, and had one of the best paying stores in the San Joaquin valley. He had been to 'Frisco for supplies, and was now on his way home.

Guy learned this much from two hours' conversation with his new acquaintance, and during that same time Mr. Wilson had heard all about Guy's history and intentions. He must have had a high opinion of the boy, too, if he believed all he said, for Guy, like everybody else who tries to make himself appear something better than he really is, was a great boaster. The stories he told of the wonderful feats he had performed with his rifle, and his skill in catching and breaking wild horses, were enough to make one open his eyes.

Guy should have known better than this. He had received a lesson that ought to have broken him of his propensity to boast. He had induced Smith, the shipping agent, to rate him on the articles as an able seaman, and that one act, performed in five minutes' time, had brought him seven long months of hazing. But Guy never thought of it now. The privations he had

undergone, and the cruel treatment he had received while he was on board the Santa Maria, seemed to him like a troubled dream. Besides, Mr. Wilson would never have an opportunity to catch him in any of his falsehoods, for in a few days Guy expected to leave him, never to meet him again.

"So you're a hunter," said the ranchman at length. "You don't look to me like you was made of the right kind of stuff fur that business. It takes them who has been born in it to foller it. I don't know nobody about here who makes a livin' at it. Even the Injuns don't."

"They don't?" exclaimed Guy. "How do they make a living then?"

"Why, they work on the ranches—herd cattle an' sheep, an' raise garden truck. If I was goin' to be a hunter I'd go at it right."

"That's just what I intend to do," said Guy. "I am going to hunt about here till I get a horse and find a conpanion, and then I'm going to strike for the plains."

"Then my man Zeke is jest the feller you want to see," said the ranchman. "He's a reg'lar hunter, an' you'd know it the minute you sot eyes onto him, fur you have to get a tree in line with him when he's movin' to see if he's goin' ahead any. He's the laziest man I ever see, an' I've seed a heap. He b'longs out on the prairy, kills buffaler fur a livin'. Last season he shot two thousand an' better. Got a dollar apiece fur the hides, an' come down to 'Frisco to see the elephant. He seed him, too, I reckon, fur when I found him he was flat busted, an' as hungry as a wolf. He's herdin' cattle fur me now to get a hoss an' a new outfit, an' when he gets 'em he's goin' back to the plains."

"Did you say he was working for a horse?" asked Guy.

"Wal, he's arned the hoss already, an' now he's workin' fur a kit—a rifle, blankets an' so on. He takes 'em outen my store, you know."

"Have you any other horse you'd like to sell?"

"Wal, I dunno," said the ranchman with a smile.

"I've got a matter of six or seven hundred, mebbe, an' might spar' one more."

"What do you ask for them?"

"All prices—twenty-five to seventy-five dollars."

"I should like to get one," said Guy, "and I am willing to work for it."

"Wal, I've got plenty that you can do—I never yet heard that work was scarce in this country—an' if you've a mind to set in with me, I'll give you twenty dollars a month an' find you."

"Find me?" repeated Guy. "Am I going to get lost?"

"Eh? Lost! No. I mean I'll give you twenty dollars a month an' all the grub you want to eat an' all the hosses you need to ride. I give Zeke thirty dollars, but you don't know nothin' about herdin' cattle. You talk like a high larnt boy. Did you ever have any schoolin'?"

"Oh, yes," said Guy. "I've been to school all my life—that is almost all my life. I've been a hunter five years, you know."

"Then mebbe you're jest the feller I want to tend store fur me. Did you ever do anything of the kind?"

It would not be safe to boast now, for there was a chance of being found out, so Guy gave a truthful answer.

"No, I never did," said he, "but I know I could learn."

"Sartin you could. It's easy larnt. Now I'll tell you what I'll do. If you're a mind to work about the ranch on week days an' tend store on Sundays, I'll give you what I told you an' let you have your pick of my hosses, an' I've got some good ones, too. Only you must promise one thing—if you want to leave me you must give me a month's notice, so that I can get somebody to fill your place. I make that bargain with all my hands."

"All right," said Guy, "I'll do it."

And so the matter was settled. Guy had found a way to get the horse he so much needed, and he was in ecstasies over it.

The journey to Mr. Wilson's ranch occupied nearly a week, and during that time Guy learned something of the outdoor life he expected to lead all the rest of his days. The change from the close, cramped forecastle of the Santa Maria to the freedom of the country was a most agreeable one, and he thoroughly enjoyed his liberty. He talked to Mr. Wilson every day about Zeke, and made up his mind that he should like him. If he only proved to be a genial, talkative companion and as good a hunter as Flint was a sailor, Guy would ask nothing more of him. Every day he grew more and more impatient to meet him, and was glad indeed when Mr. Wilson pointed out a house in advance of them and informed him that when they reached it they would be at their journey's end.

"All this land you see here," said the ranchman, waving his whip toward the broad, level plain which stretched away on both sides of the road, "used to be Congress land. When I first squatted here I had it all to myself, but other fellers kept comin' in all the while with their hosses an' cattle an' locatin' their farms right in the best part of my pastur', an' at last they got to crowdin' me so heavy that I had to send Zeke with the most of my stock about forty miles farther down the valley. I'm goin' to send you down to him to-morrer with some supplies."

"But what if I should get lost?" said Guy. "You must remember that I don't know the country yet."

"You can foller a plain trail, can't you?"

"Yes, I can do that."

"Then you needn't get lost unless you're a mind to, 'cause the road's as plain as daylight. Besides, I'll put the pack on the ole clay-bank, an' she knows every step of the way."

So saying, Mr. Wilson cracked his whip, and urging his tired horses into a trot brought his heavy wagon up before the door of the rancho in fine style.

The rancho was a roomy, rambling structure built of unplaned boards, and like the hotel at which Guy had

stopped in San Francisco, gave promise of anything but comfortable accommodations. The inside proved on closer acquaintance to be quite as cheerless as the exterior. There was no stove, no fire-place, no chairs, not even a bedstead in the house that Guy could discover. It looked perfectly poverty-stricken. But nevertheless the rancho, and its occupants, too, were as clean as new pins. The earthen floor had evidently just been swept; the table and the benches which served in lieu of the chairs were as white as sand and water could make them; the Mexican wife of the proprietor was neatly dressed, and the children, who crowded about him as he jumped down from the wagon, had just received a thorough scrubbing in anticipation of their sire's return.

Guy carried his rifle and pack into the house, and during the next half-hour worked hard enough to get up a splendid appetite for supper, although an unpleasant incident that happened drove it all away again.

The first thing Mr. Wilson did was to take a key from a nail under the porch, and open a door leading into a small room adjoining the main building. This proved to be the store of which he had spoken. Here the ranchman kept a variety of useful and salable articles; among the latter tobacco and grape brandy, which, as he told Guy, formed his principal stock in trade. He further informed his new hand that although the rancho was dull enough on week days, it was the very reverse on Sundays, for then it was the headquarters of all the ranchmen and Indians for fifteen miles around, who congregated there to drink, shoot, and run horses. Mr. Wilson liked to join in these sports, and he wanted somebody to take care of the store, so that he could give his undivided attention to them.

After the wagon had been unloaded and the contents stowed away in the store, Guy assisted Mr. Wilson in taking care of the horses. This was done in a very few minutes, for all that was necessary was to unharness them and turn them loose on the prairie.

"Are you not afraid they will stray away?" asked Guy.

"I don't care if they do," replied the ranchman. "I've got plenty more."

"But you might lose them altogether."

"No fear of that. They've got my brand on 'em, an' everybody knows it. Now," he added, throwing the harness into the wagon, and leading the way toward a small corral into which twenty or thirty horses had just been driven by an Indian vacquero, I'll show you the hoss I'm going to sell you. You can try him now an' see how you like him, an' to-morrer you can ride him down to Zeke."

If there was any part of his hunter life on which Guy, during his day-dreaming, had dwelt with more satisfaction than another, it was that which he expected to spend in the saddle. Although he had never mounted a horse in his life, he had somehow got it into his head, along with his other foolish notions, that he had in him the qualities of which accomplished and fearless riders are made. He would render himself famous, not only by shooting grizzly bears and Indians, but by riding horses that nobody else dared to mount. He hoped during his wanderings to meet that celebrated white pacer, which, according to a certain cheap novel he had read, had often been captured by strategy but never ridden. This famous horse always threw those who attempted to mount him, trampled them to death, and then made off, fairly distancing the fleetest nags that could be brought in pursuit of him.

Guy believed in the existence of this animal as firmly as he believed in the existence of the boy-trappers, and hoped some day to own and subdue him; but now that he had a chance to begin his career as a rough rider, he felt very much like backing out. He found that there is a vast difference between thinking about things and doing them. The actions of the horses in the corral frightened him. They were such restless fellows! They danced and curveted, reared, flourished their heels in the

air, and dashed about the inclosure like veritable wild horses.

The vacquero, in obedience to his master's order, entered the corral, lasso in hand, and in a few minutes came out again leading a small, clean-limbed horse, which seemed very much averse to leaving his companions, and showed his disapproval of the whole proceeding by furious kicks and plunges.

"Thar he is!" exclaimed the ranchman. "Twenty-five dollars fur him, an' that's dog cheap. Gentle as a kitten, as anybody can see."

"No," said Guy, "*I* can't see it."

"Oh, he's lively, of course. He hain't been doin' nothing fur three or four months, you know, an' never had a saddle on him but two or three times. If he hain't the next thing to a lightnin' express train, you jest take my hat an' say no more about it. Purty as a red wagon wheel, too, he is. Jump? I should say he could. *And* last! You can't tire him down. He's made of iron. Thar he is. Jump on him an' put him through his paces."

While this conversation was going on, the vacquero had with wonderful dexterity slipped a bridle over the horse's head, strapped a deep Spanish saddle on his back, and now stood holding him in readiness for Guy to mount.

CHAPTER XX.

GUY, THE ROUGH RIDER.

GUY HEARD scarcely a word of Mr. Wilson's glowing description of the merits of his horse, for his mind was busy with something else. He was trying to think up some good excuse for declining to mount the animal. He made one praiseworthy resolution then and there, and that was that he would never again indulge in boasting. He had never done it yet without being exposed.

"Thar he is!" repeated the ranchman. "Jump on! an' if he don't take you through San Joaquin a leetle trifle faster than you ever traveled afore on hoss-back I'll give him to you for nothing. Hand us your foot an' I'll throw you on."

Guy's pride was stronger than his fear. He could see no way to get out of the difficulty into which he had brought himself by his reckless boasting except by a frank confession, and that, of course, was not to be thought of. He noticed that the animal became quieter since the bit was put into his mouth, and consoling himself with the hope that perhaps he was not so bad after all, Guy seized the horn of the saddle, gave his foot to Mr. Wilson, and in a twinkling was seated on the animal's back.

The horse seemed astonished at his presumption. He turned his head first one way and then the other, looking at Guy over each shoulder, while the ranchman and his vacquero begun to back away, as if in anticipation of something that was about to happen.

"Put your feet in the stirrups," said Mr. Wilson, "an' I'll give him a good send off."

Before Guy could obey the horse begun his antics. He put his head down between his knees, humped up

"'PUT YOUR FEET IN THE STIRRUPS,' SAID MR. WILSON, 'AN I'LL GIVE HIM A GOOD SEND OFF.'"

his back, brought his four feet together, and bounded from the ground, coming down as solid as a rock, and with a concussion that was terrific. Guy arose in the air about a foot and a half, and then settled into the saddle again with a jar that fairly made his teeth chatter.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the ranchman, who appeared to be as highly delighted as he would have been over an exhibition of fancy riding in a circus; "that was well done! He bucks beautiful, don't he?"

"Ye—yes," said Guy, who had not the least idea what Mr. Wilson meant. "But why don't he go ahead? Get up here!"

The horse did get up—this time higher than before—and he executed the movement with a vigor and viciousness which showed that he meant business. He made a most terrific stiff-legged jump—a "buck," Mr. Wilson called it—and when he came down, Guy, with his arms and legs flying wildly about, went up like a rocket, hung suspended in the air for a moment, and then whirled over and came down on his head and shoulders with a crushing force.

"Wal, I declar! he got you off'n him that time, didn't he?" exclaimed the ranchman, hastening to Guy's assistance. "Now I'll try him, an' if you will keep an eye on me I'll larn you how to ride a buck-jumper."

Guy was too nearly senseless to keep an eye on anything. He could not stand without holding fast to something. Mr. Wilson leaned him up against the side of the corral as if he had been a stick of wood, and then addressed an order in Spanish to his vacquero, who hurried off to the house, presently returning with a pair of huge Mexican spurs. These, with the assistance of the Indian, the ranchman quickly fastened to his feet, and walking up to the horse, which had scarcely moved from his tracks since he rid himself of Guy, placed one hand on his back, and with a quick bound, sprung into the saddle. No sooner was he fairly seated than he brought his armed heels against the sides of the animal.

which sprung away at the top of his speed, and the last Guy saw of him, he was making rapid headway across the plain, while his rider was urging him to greater efforts by merciless applications of his persuaders.

When the ranchman returned, at the end of a quarter of an hour, he found his new hand stretched out on the porch, suffering from a severe headache, and in no humor to listen to his description of the manner in which he had conquered the buck-jumper.

Guy had been hungry a few minutes before, but he did not want any supper now. The tortillas, beans and beef, with which the table was loaded, had no attraction for him; he simply drank a cup of coffee, without any milk (ranchmen in California raise cattle for the hides and meat, and not for the sake of milk and butter), and intimated to Mr. Wilson that he would be glad to be shown to his room.

"Eh?" exclaimed the ranchman, as if he did not quite understand his request.

"I say I should like to go to my room," repeated Guy. "I want to see if I can't sleep off this headache."

"Oh, you want to go to bed, do you? All right."

As Mr. Wilson said this, he walked out into the yard to light his pipe at the fire over which the supper had been cooked, and when he came back he carried over his shoulder a saddle, which he placed at one end of the porch. Then he went into the house and brought out Guy's blanket and poncho; and when he had spread them beside the saddle, the bed was made.

"Thar you are," said he, "an' you can tumble down as soon as you please."

Guy was astonished. The porch was the only room he was to occupy while he remained in that house, and his saddle and blankets were to form his bed. This was rather a primitive way of living, but it was the style at Mr. Wilson's rancho, as he found when the rest of the family were ready to retire. The farmer's wife and children stowed themselves away somewhere in the house, but the man himself made his bed a short dis-

tance from Guy's, while two Indian herdsmen found sleeping apartments at the opposite end of the porch.

The first part of the night Guy passed in anything but an agreeable manner. The saddle proved to be a hard, uncomfortable pillow for an aching head and, moreover, one of the small army of dogs, which Mr. Wilson kept about the house, insisted on occupying a portion of his bed, and showed a disposition to be snappish if the boy happened to crowd him as he tossed uneasily about. Guy stood the imposition for a while, but becoming angry at last, he kicked the dog off the porch, rearranged his bed, folded his jacket and spread it over the saddle, and then lay down again and slept soundly until he was awakened by footsteps and the continued murmur of conversation.

He opened his eyes to find that it was broad daylight, and that preparations were being made to start him off on his journey. There was the "old clay-bank," a cream-colored mare, which was to carry the supplies to Zeke, the buffalo hunter, and act as Guy's guide at the same time. A large pack-saddle was strapped on her back, and if one might judge by the appearance of it, it was well filled. The buck-jumper was there, too, standing quietly by the horse-trough, saddled and bridled, and waiting for his rider. Guy's rifle leaned against the wall at the head of his bed, with his powder-horn, game-bag, a pair of spurs, and a long rawhide hanging from the muzzle.

"Halloo! you're awake at last, are you?" exclaimed the ranchman, who just then stepped out of the house to arouse Guy. "I thought that seein' you had the headache I'd let you sleep this mornin', but it's time to get up now."

Guy scrambled to his feet, looking none the worse for his accident of the night before, and when he had dipped his head in the horse-trough a few times, he felt as sprightly and vigorous as though he had never told a lie, and received in consequence the hardest fall of his life.

The morning was fresh and glorious, as mornings always are in California at that season of the year, the air was exhilarating—every breath of it seemed to infuse new life into him—and Guy was elated with the prospect of a pleasant journey and an interview with the buffalo hunter, who was the very man he most wished to see. He could have looked forward to a day of uninterrupted enjoyment but for one thing, and that was the presence of the buck-jumper. It had a depressing effect upon him. He did not see why the ranchman should give him that horse to ride when he had so nearly dashed his brains out the night before.

"Come in an' get some coffee an' slapjacks," said Mr. Wilson, at the same time tossing Guy a piece of a gunny sack on which to wipe his hands and face.

The boy's appetite having come back to him by this time, he made a hearty breakfast, and while he was eating it, listened to his employer's advice and instructions concerning the journey he was about to undertake.

"Zeke is forty miles away, as I told you," said the ranchman, "an' as your trail, part of the way, leads over the mountains, you won't be able to travel very fast; but the ole clay-bank is a right smart walker, an' if you have no bad luck you had oughter be in Zeke's camp by four this arternoon. About midday you'll cross Deer Run, an' thar the mar' will want to stop an' pick about a bit, an' while she's doin' it, you can set down under a tree an' eat your dinner. You'll see plenty of antelope thar, an' you'll have no sort of trouble in knockin' over one fur your dinner, if you know how to hunt 'em; but fur fear you don't, I've put a leetle something in your game-bag. You'd best kill an antelope, howsomever. if you get the chance, 'cause mebbe it'll help you to make friends with Zeke."

"How shall I know him when I see him?" asked Guy.

"Know him!" said the ranchman. "The mar'll know him, an' he'll know the mar. The fust question he'll ask you will be, 'You got any tobacker in that thar

pack-saddle?' When you see a man who says that to you, tell him 'hallo,' 'cause that's Zeke. He'll be a leetle trifle cross an' ugly at fust, 'cause he's been outen tobacker now three or four days; but a chaw or two will set him all right, an' you'll find him a mighty palaverin' sort o' feller. I want you back by to-morrer night so that you can take your fust lesson in the store on Sunday."

"I should be much more eager to undertake the journey if I had a gentler horse to ride," said Guy.

"A gentler hoss!" repeated the ranchman, opening his eyes in amazement. "It can't be found on this farm nor in Californy nuther, a gentler hoss than that thar hoss can't. Why, a baby could ride him."

"But I am out of practice, you know," said Guy meekly.

"Yes, I seed that; but you won't have no trouble while the ole clay-bank is with him. He'll go along like an old cow."

Guy's fears were by no means set at rest by this assurance, but he raised no further objections to the horse, and having satisfied his appetite, he arose from his chair and begun preparations for his journey, in which he was assisted by the ranchman. His poncho and blanket were rolled up and strapped behind his saddle; the game-bag containing his dinner was suspended from the pommel; his spurs were adjusted; the long rawhide, which was intended as a persuader for the clay-bank, was tied to his wrist by a thong of buckskin; and when Guy, after the display of a great deal of awkwardness, had managed to seat himself in the saddle, the farmer handed him his rifle and spoke to the mare, which set off at a rapid walk, the buck-jumper following quietly at her heels.

Guy ought to have been supremely happy now, for he was in the very situation he had so often dreamed of and longed for. He had a "good horse under him," a "trusty rifle on his shoulder," and everything that was necessary to set him up in business as a hunter. But

still things were not just to his liking—there were always some drawbacks.

In the first place horseback-riding was by no means the easy, agreeable way of getting over the ground that he had imagined it to be, particularly to one who was entirely unaccustomed to it and who did not know how to sit in a saddle.

The buck-jumper may have been very fleet, but he was an uncommon hard traveler, especially when he found it necessary to quicken his pace in order to keep up with the fast-walking old clay-bank. On these occasions he exhibited a style of progression peculiarly his own, and which was perfect torture to his rider, who was churned up and down, jerked backward and forward, and jolted from side to side in a way that was quite alarming.

Then, too, the horse showed by the way he sometimes arched his back and looked over his shoulder at Guy that there was plenty of mischief in him still, and every few minutes he would further exhibit it by making a jump to one side or the other, and doing it so quickly that Guy would certainly have been thrown to the ground had he not clung with all his strength to the horn of the saddle. The reason for this was that Guy, forgetting he had spurs on, kept his heels close to the animal's side in order to secure a firm seat, and thus the rowels were pricking him continually.

Another thing that severely tested his patience and endurance was his rifle. If it weighed twelve pounds when he left the rancho, it weighed a hundred before he had gone a quarter of a mile, judging by the way it pressed into his shoulders and made his arms ache.

Guy felt a good deal of satisfaction in carrying the weapon about with him, for it was the first thing of the kind he had ever owned; but at the end of a mile he wished most heartily that he had left it at the rancho.

At the end of two miles he told himself that if he were ever required to make this journey again, he would leave his horse at home and follow the clay-bank on foot. At

the end of three he came to the conclusion that he had mistaken his calling; and by the time he had put four miles between himself and Mr. Wilson's rancho, he wished from the bottom of his heart that he was back on board the Santa Maria.

At last, when Guy could endure it no longer, he set himself at work to find some way to alleviate his misery. He saw hanging from the horn of his saddle a lariat with which the thoughtful ranchman had provided him, so that he might stake out his horse when he went into camp. With this he formed a sling for his rifle, and tied the weapon securely to his saddle. This eased his arms and shoulders, and to relieve the rest of his tired muscles he jumped down and walked a mile or two; and so, by alternate riding and walking, finally reached Deer Run, where he was to stop and rest while the clay-bank was "picking about."

Following the instructions of his employer, he staked out his own horse, leaving the mare to do as she pleased, and, too tired to eat or do anything else with comfort, threw himself on the grass under the spreading branches of a live oak, and heartily wished himself among civilized people once more. He thought of the antelope which the ranchman had told him he would here find in abundance, but was much too dispirited to make any effort to secure one. Besides, his rifle was empty, and he did not know how to load it.

"And if it was loaded I would not know how to shoot it," thought Guy; "and neither do I know how to hunt antelope. I've heard that it takes one who understands their nature and habits to hunt them successfully, so I guess I won't bother with them. I'd rather rest. I believe Mr. Wilson told the truth when he said that I hadn't the right sort of stuff in me to make a hunter or trapper. They must be made of something besides flesh and blood if they can stand such a jolting as I have had to-day."

Guy rolled restlessly about under the oak while the clay-bank was cropping the grass, and when she had

eaten her fill she gave him notice of the fact by slaking her thirst at the run and setting off on her journey again of her own accord. With a groan of despair Guy mounted his horse and followed her.

The tortures he had already experienced were aggravated ten-fold during the afternoon; for the trail, which had hitherto led him over a level plain, now crossed a range of hills almost high enough to be called mountains, and the traveling was rough indeed. The sudden springs and lunges which his horse made in going up the steep ascent racked him in every muscle. Only once did he dismount to walk, and then he was glad to scramble back into his saddle again, for the tireless horses went ahead at such a rate that he could not keep pace with them. Up hill and down he went, through a wilderness which seemed to have no end; and when at last he became so exhausted that it was only by a strong exercise of will that he could keep himself in his saddle, he was electrified by the appearance of an apparition in greasy buckskin, who came before him so suddenly that it frightened him.

"Say, you!" it exclaimed, "you brought any tobacker?"

Guy had reached his journey's end at last.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BUFFALO HUNTER.

AS GUY straightened up in his saddle he took a good look at the man who had so suddenly appeared before him. There was no need that he should ask who he was, for he knew, by his words of greeting, that he could be none other than Zeke, the buffalo hunter. He was the first hunter Guy had ever seen, and of course he gazed at him with no little interest.

He was not very favorably impressed with the man's appearance, for he was certainly the roughest and most repulsive specimen of humanity that Guy had ever put eyes on. He could form no idea of the expression of his features, for his face was so effectually concealed by thick, bushy whiskers that nothing but a pair of eyes and a low, retreating forehead could be seen. His hair, coarse and matted, hung down upon his shoulders, and his hands were terribly soiled and begrimed. He would have been a tall man if he had stood erect, but he walked almost half-bent, in an attitude similar to that a wild beast might assume when about to spring upon its prey, and moved along in a shambling, loose-jointed manner, as if he had scarcely energy enough to keep himself from falling to pieces. His garments were a strange mixture of the civilized and savage, and Guy thought they ought long ago to have been replaced by better ones. He wore a tattered slouch hat on his head, held a rifle in his hand, and carried a powder-horn and bullet-pouch over his shoulder. Taken altogether, he was very unlike Guy's *beau ideal* of a hunter.

"Say, you!" repeated Zeke impatiently; "you got any tobacker? That's what I want ter know."

"Plenty of it," replied Guy. "You'll find it in the

pack-saddle. Mr. Wilson thought you would want a good supply."

"Then why didn't he send it afore?" growled the hunter.

"He sent it as soon as he could. He came from Frisco only yesterday."

Zeke leaned his rifle against the nearest tree, plunged his hands into the pack-saddle, and while he was searching for the tobacco, repeatedly ran his eyes over the face and figure of the boy, who seemed to be a great curiosity to him.

He said nothing, however, until he had found a plug of the coveted weed, and thrust a good portion of it into his cheek. After he had chewed on it a while the effects became perceptible. The discontented, almost savage, look his face had worn, gave place to an expression a trifle more amiable, and when he spoke his voice sounded more like a human being's, and less like the growl of an angry bear.

"Who be you?" he demanded. "I never seed you in these parts afore."

"No," said Guy, "you never did. My name is Harris, and I used to be a sailor; but I'm a hunter now."

"You!" exclaimed Zeke, with undisguised contempt in his tones and looks. What do you hunt—squirrels?"

"Well, I have never hunted anything yet," said Guy, who thought it best to tell the truth; "but I want to be a buffalo hunter like you; so I hope that we shall be fast friends, and that you will teach me all you know. Will you?"

"Humph!" grunted Zeke. "Let's go to camp."

"How far is it from here?" asked Guy.

"A matter of five mile, mebbe. I got tired of waitin', an' come up to see if thar was anybody goin' to fetch me any tobacker."

"Five miles?" echoed Guy. "I am almost tired out with riding, and should be glad to walk if the horses did not go so fast."

"Let 'em go," said Zeke. "I'll walk with you. The mar' knows the way, an' the other'll foller."

Guy was glad to act upon this suggestion. While he was dismounting, the hunter picked up his rifle and examined it with a critical eye. Guy was astonished at the ease with which he drew it up to his face, and the steadiness with which he held it while glancing along the barrel.

"This your'n?" asked Zeke.

"Yes; I bought it in Frisco—paid fifteen dollars for it, and haven't had time to shoot it yet. Suppose you try it, and see if it is a good one. Here are the bullets, powder and caps in my game-bag. It carries a ball large enough to kill a buffalo—doesn't it?"

"Sartin."

"Well, I hope you will give me a chance to try it on one some day, will you?"

"Humph!" was the answer Zeke deigned to give.

In accordance with Guy's request the hunter proceeded to load the rifle, and as the boy knew that it was one of the first things he must learn, he kept a close watch of his movements.

Zeke first took from the game-bag a bullet, which he placed in the palm of his hand, and then from the horn poured powder enough on it to cover it. This done he put the bullet into his mouth, and after pouring the powder down the barrel and hitting the weapon a knock or two on the ground to drive it into the tube, begun searching in Guy's game-bag for something.

Failing to find the article, whatever it was, he took from the string which hung suspended from his buttonhole, a small piece of thick cloth, which Guy saw was greased on one side. This the hunter placed over the muzzle of the rifle—the greased side down—put the bullet upon it, and drove it home with the ramrod. It was all done then except putting on the cap, and that occupied scarcely more than a second's time.

Taken altogether it was a complicated operation, Guy thought, and he did not know whether he could remember all the details or not. He found that he had forgotten one thing, and that was the cloth which the

hunter wrapped around the bullet. No doubt that was the "patching" he had often read about.

When the rifle was loaded the hunter raised it to his shoulder and started down the trail, Guy following with his game-bag in one hand and Zeke's rifle in the other. He was anything but pleased at the manner in which his advances had been received, but still he was not disheartened by it.

No doubt the hunter was wearied with his day's work —Guy knew that he had been in the saddle ever since sunrise watching the cattle under his charge—and perhaps after the tobacco had had time to have its full effect, and Zeke had taken a good supper and smoked a pipe, he would be better-natured. Then Guy could make another effort to work his way into his good graces.

While on the way to the valley in which Zeke's camp was located, Guy had frequent opportunities to witness his companion's skill with the rifle. Squirrels were abundant, and the hunter, without leaving the trail, succeeded in bringing down a dozen or more, and every one of them shot through the head. This was Guy's first lesson in hunting, and he watched every move Zeke made. He now saw how the man came by that stealthy, crouching style of progression which he had noticed. He had practiced it so often while in pursuit of game that it had become a part of his nature.

At the foot of the mountains the woods terminated, and of course there were no squirrels to be found on the open plain. By the time they reached this point the tobacco, aided perhaps by the fine shooting he had enjoyed, was beginning to tell upon the hunter, who showed a disposition to throw off his reserve altogether. He found his way to Guy's heart by assuring him that his rifle was as "fine a we'pon as he had ever drawed to his face," and followed it up by inquiring very particularly into the boy's history. And Guy was quite willing to tell him everything he wanted to know. He told him how long he had been away

from home, why he had left it, what he had done since he had been adrift in the world, and what he wanted to do next. Being anxious to make a friend of the hunter he concealed nothing, not even the fact that he had twenty-five dollars in money, which he was willing to turn over to Zeke to be expended in any way the latter saw fit, so long as it benefited them both.

The hunter became more and more interested as Guy proceeded, and the mention of the money and the sight of the purse the boy carried about his neck broke down the last barrier between them. Suddenly stopping and facing Guy, he extended to him one of his huge, dirty paws.

"Put it thar, pard," said he. "I'll take you."

"Will you, really?" exclaimed Guy, almost beside himself with excitement and delight.

"Sartin I will. I've been a-lookin' an' a-waitin' fur two years in hopes some feller would come along who would do fur a chum, an' here he is, come at last. You're just the chap fur me. I'll make you the best buffaler hunter that Kansas ever seed. I'll larn you to ride an' shoot, an' make a man of you."

"And will you teach me how to fight Indians and catch wild horses?" asked Guy.

"In course I will."

"How far is Kansas from here?"

"Wal, it's a right smart piece."

"Shall we go there on horseback?"

"Sartin."

"And camp out on the way?"

"In course."

"When shall we start?"

"We'll be on our way to-morrow night."

"To-morrow night!" repeated Guy. "Why, Mr. Wilson told me that he never hired a man without making him promise to give at least a month's notice when he wanted to quit."

"What do I care for Wilson?" asked Zeke contemptu-

ously. "A free hunter does what he likes. I can trust you, I reckon."

"Certainly you can."

"Cause if I can't, I don't want anything to do with you," said Zeke.

"Oh, you can trust me, I assure you," declared Guy earnestly, fearing that the hunter was about to go back from his promise. "What do you want me to do?"

"I'll tell you arter supper. I've got an idee in my head an' want to put on my thinkin' cap an' think it out; so don't say nothin' to me till I speak. Let's go an' eat some of them squirrels. In a few days from now we'll be livin' on buffaler hump an' marrer bones, an that's livin', I tell you! I say agin, you're jest the feller I've been a-lookin' fur."

The hunter relapsed into silence, and so did Guy, who marched along by his side, and although he carried a ponderous rifle on his shoulder and a heavy string of squirrels in his hand, he walked as if he were treading on air. He forgot that he had that day ridden forty miles on a rough-going horse. He did not bestow a thought upon his weary body, for his mind was too fully occupied with the future. In a few hours more, he kept saying to himself, his bright dreams would all be realized. He had got on the right side of the hunter at last—there could be no doubt of that. Zeke was as cordial as one could possibly be—more so, in fact, than any man he had ever before met. Perhaps if Guy had been more experienced in the ways of the world, this would have aroused his suspicions and made him a little more guarded in his intercourse with his new friend. That caution was necessary, we can see by following Zeke for a moment in his meditations.

"If I hain't found a way outer this diffikilty now, I'm a buffaler myself," thought the hunter. "This onsuspectin' leetle cub wouldn't a-been more welcome to my camp if he'd been a hangel loaded down with pipes an' tobacker enough to do me all my life. I'm monstrous tired of herdin' cattle, 'cause it's too hard work. I've

done it fur a hull month, an' all I've got to show fur it is my hoss. The rifle I used, the powder, lead, an' blankets, all b'long to Wilson, an' has got to be paid fur. It'll take me two months longer to 'arn everything I need, an' I had oughter be on my way to the prairy now. I had kinder thought that mebbe I'd steal the hull kit an' put out with it, but I'm a'most afeard to do it. Wilson, he's lightnin' on wheels when his dander's riz, an' he'd have all the settlers in the valley arter me so quick that it would make a feller's head swim; an' if they ketched me——"

Here Zeke threw his head over on his right shoulder and made a motion with his hand as if he were winding a rope about his neck and hauling himself up with it—a proceeding which made Guy look at him in great surprise.

"I didn't say nothin'," said the hunter.

"I know it," said Guy, "and I didn't say anything either."

Zeke shifted Guy's rifle to his other shoulder and went on with his soliloquy.

"Now this cub has got a good fittin' out, a fine rifle, huntin'-knife, blankets, an' powder'n lead enough to last me as fur as Laramie anyways. When I get thar the twenty-five dollars he's got will buy me more powder'n lead, an' the traders will advance the other things I want. I can steal everything he's got an' put out as easy as fallin' off a log. He can't foller me up an' ketch me, an' he ain't got no friends to do it fur him. I would be off this very night, only I must first make things squar' with Wilson, to keep him off'n my trail. Now how am I goin' to do it? That's what I put my thinkin' cap on fur, an' that's what I want to think out."

While Zeke was turning this problem over in his mind he and his young companion arrived at his camp, which was located under an oak tree near the middle of a beautiful valley. Guy would not have known when he reached it had he not seen his own horse and the mare grazing near a third which was picketed a short distance

from the tree, for there was but little to indicate the existence of a camp—nothing, in fact, but a pair of blankets, a small piece of beef hanging from one of the branches of the oak, and a few embers and ashes which marked the spot where a fire had once been kindled.

The hunter at once took possession of the blankets, where he lay gazing intently into the branches above his head, and Guy set about putting the camp in order. It was novel business to him, but he liked to do it, and Zeke, being too lazy to lift a finger unless it was absolutely necessary, was perfectly willing that he should.

Guy first led the mare to the tree, and begun the work of unloading the pack-saddle. The supplies, consisting for the most part of coffee, tea, sugar, flour, and tobacco, were piled about the roots of the tree and covered with branches, as a slight protection from the weather and any prowling beast that might happen along during the hunter's absence.

Then he relieved the mare of the pack-saddle, removed the saddle and bridle from his own horse, and after staking out both the animals and arranging his bed, proceeded to kindle a fire and make ready his supper.

After a thorough search of the camp he found something which had evidently done duty as a coffee-pot, and when he had filled it with water and set it on the coals, he stopped, not knowing what else to do. Tortillas he could not make, and he had not yet learned the art of skinning squirrels and cooking them before the fire on spits. However, he could get on without the squirrels. He had a supply of eatables in his game-bag, and the cold bread and meat, with the addition of a cup of hot coffee, would make him a good supper. If the hunter wanted anything he could get up and cook it himself.

Guy, having arranged his table to his satisfaction, poured some of the coffee into a cup which the ranchman had been thoughtful enough to put into his game-bag with luncheon, and settled back on his elbow, believing that he could do full justice to the meal, not

having tasted a mouthful since leaving the rancho shortly after daylight.

All these movements had been closely watched by Zeke, who was by no means so fully occupied with his meditations as he pretended to be. Seeing that Guy was eating the bread and meat with evident relish, he crawled slowly off his bed and joined him at his meal.

The supper disappeared rapidly after that, Zeke using both hands to crowd the food into his mouth, and emptying Guy's cup at a draught whenever he was thirsty. In a very short space of time the last of the bread and meat was out of sight and the coffee-pot emptied.

Zeke gave a grunt of satisfaction, but had nothing to say until he had filled his pipe and lighted it with a brand from the fire. Then, between his long, deliberate puffs, he managed to utter the words:

"I've got it."

"Got what?" asked the boy.

"I know what we'll do. I've thought my plans out."

"All right, pard," said Guy, who believed that if he was going to be a hunter he might as well begin to use the language of one. "What are they? Spit 'em out."

"I can do that," said Zeke, "an' it won't take me long, nuther. In the fust place, I s'pose Wilson told you to go back to-morrow, didn't he? I thought so. Wal, you go back 'cordin' to orders, but instead of takin' your own gun an' huntin' rig with you, take mine an' leave your'n. Understand? You see, the rifle an' things b'longin' to it that I've got here ain't mine; they're Wilson's. I took 'em outen the store agreein' to work fur 'em an' the other things I need to take me back to the other side of the mountains whar I b'long an' whar I'll stay if I onct git thar agin, I bet you. But if I stop to 'arn everything I want it will take me two months more, an' by that time we must be among the buffaler, if we're goin' to get any hides this season. You've got things enough and money enough to last us till we get to Laramie, an' thar I can get what

else we want from the traders. One rifle an' one blanket will last us till then."

"Will one horse be enough?" asked Guy.

"No; we must have a hoss apiece, an' I've got 'em—that one that I 'arned from Wilson, an' I've bought another from a feller livin' up the valley."

It occurred to Guy right here to ask how Zeke could have bought another horse, seeing that he had no money and had been working for Mr. Wilson ever since he had been in that part of the country, but before he could speak the hunter went on;

"Now you go back to-morrow mornin', like I was tellin' you, an' take the rifle an' all the other things that b'longs to Wilson, an' give 'em to him an' tell him thar's his things—I don't want 'em—an' he must send a man down here to onct to take care of these yere cattle, 'cause I hain't goin' to stay no longer. You needn't say nothin' else to him, howsomever. Don't tell him of the bargain me an' you has made, but when it comes dark you slip away from the house an' meet me at the water-tank. You know whar that spoutin' well is, don't you?"

"Yes," said Guy, "I saw it last night."

"Wal, you come thar as soon as it comes dark, an' I'll be on hand with two hosses—this one an' another, an' all we'll have to do will be to put off. Understand?"

"Yes," replied Guy, "I understand it all."

"Arter you leave here in the mornin' I'll go an' get my other hoss that I was a tellin' you of," continued Zeke. "You see the reason why I am leavin' Wilson in this way, an' without sayin' nuthin' to him, is 'cause I agreed to give him notice when I wanted to quit, but I can't afford to waste a month's time layin' around here doin' nothin', when the buffaler is comin' in by thousands an' waitin' to be shot. Understand, don't you?"

Yes, Guy was sure he understood the hunter's plans and intentions perfectly, and Zeke was equally certain he did not, and so he repeated them again and again, until the boy knew them by heart. After that he

launched off into glowing descriptions of buffalo hunts and told of fights with Indians and bears, and adventures with wild horses, until Guy was almost beside himself with excitement and impatience. Then Zeke said he was tired, and crawled back to his blankets, but Guy tended the fire and sat by it for two hours longer, thinking of the future; and when he went to sleep it was to dream over the thrilling scenes the hunter had just described to him.

CHAPTER XXII.

BUSTED AND DISGUSTED.

HE NEXT morning, after a hearty breakfast, during which he listened once more to Zeke's plans and instructions, Guy mounted his horse, and led by the old clay-bank, set out for Mr. Wilson's rancho.

The journey did not seem nearly so long and tiresome now as it did the day before, for he had something beside his bodily aches and pains to think of. He had seen a live hunter, had made a friend of him, and by that time to-morrow, if nothing happened to prevent, he would be on the way to his hunting-grounds. Dreaming of the glorious life he was so soon to commence made the way seem short to him.

About four o'clock in the afternoon he drew up with his little train in front of Mr. Wilson's house, and found that gentleman waiting for him.

"Wal, you done it, didn't you?" exclaimed the ranchman, as Guy swung himself from the saddle, "an' didn't get lost, nor throwed, nuther. Whose rifle have you got thar?"

"Zeke's—or rather yours," said Guy. "Zeke doesn't want it, for he can't stay long enough to earn it. He's going back to his hunting-grounds, and wants you to send a man down to relieve him."

"Oh, he does, does he?" exclaimed Mr. Wilson. "Whar's your huntin' kit?"

"I left it with Zeke. He wants to try the rifle."

"Wal, if you hain't the most confidin' boy I ever see in all my born days, I don't want a cent," said the ranchman. "I told you that you'd find him a mighty palaverin' sort of a feller, an' I thought that would put you on your guard. You'll never see them things of

your'n agin. Zeke's gettin' ready to run away. I can see that plain enough; but if he takes any of my property with him, ef it's even so much as a bar of lead, I'll have all the constables in the valley arter him in the shake of a buck's tail. He's 'arned a hoss since he's been here, and that's all he can take with him. I'll ride down myself, to-morrow, an' see what he means by such actin'.

Mr. Wilson's words made Guy rather uneasy. He did not want to doubt the hunter—Zeke had been so very cordial and so profuse in his promises of friendship and assistance that the boy had implicit faith in him—but still he begun to think that he had been rather hasty in trusting him. If Zeke run away with his hunting-kit, he would be just thirty-five dollars out of pocket. But he need not have been under any apprehensions. The hunter certainly intended to possess himself of all Guy's property, but he wanted at the same time to get his hands on the twenty-five dollars the boy carried in his monk-bag.

Mr. Wilson begun fishing up from the capacious depths of the pack-saddle the things Zeke had stowed away there, and Guy thought he looked a little disappointed when he found that his property had all been returned to him. The hunter, knowing the disposition of the man with whom he had to deal, had sent back everything.

The hours between four o'clock and dark passed away very slowly. Knowing that he had many a mile of hard riding yet to do before he could go to sleep, Guy refreshed himself with a hearty supper, and then lay down on a bench under the porch. He grew very restless and impatient as the appointed time drew near, and although he longed for its arrival, he almost dreaded to have it come, for if Zeke broke his word, there was another bright hope dashed to the ground.

It begun to grow dark at last, and Guy stepped down from the porch, and walked slowly toward the "spouting well," as Zeke had called it, looking back every few steps to make sure that he was not followed.

He was not obliged to wait even a moment at the water-tank, for his new friend, faithful to his promise, was there with two horses. Guy was greatly relieved.

"Halloo, pard!" said he. "I'm glad you have come, for I begun to feel a little shaky. Mr. Wilson told me that I'd never see my things again."

"You got that money with you?" asked Zeke.

"Of course I have."

"Whar is it?"

"In my monk-bag around my neck. Have you got my rifle and other things?"

"Sartin. We couldn't well travel cl'ar to Kansas without 'em, I reckon. So Wilson tried to make you believe I was a-goin' back on you, did he? What else did he say?"

"He says he is going to ride down to see you to-morrow, and find out what you mean by such actions."

"All right. That will give us a hull day the start of him if he tries to foller us. Here's your hoss."

Guy was aching in every bone and muscle after his long ride (eighty miles in two days was quite an achievement for a boy who had never ridden on horseback before), and it was only after considerable trouble and some assistance from the hunter that he succeeded in climbing into his saddle. It was hard work, too, to keep up with Zeke, who at once put his horse into a gallop and went ahead, as if he were in a great hurry. He never drew rein, even long enough to speak to Guy, until midnight, and then the only reason he stopped was because the moon went down and it was too dark to travel.

He and Guy stretched themselves out under a tree beside the road without lighting a fire, and slept soundly until morning. At the first peep of day they ate a little of the dried beef with which Zeke had filled Guy's game-bag, and then resumed their rapid ride, halting only for a few minutes at noon to rest their horses and eat a hasty luncheon.

Guy was fast giving out, in spite of the excitement

which had thus far kept him up, and when, just as the sun was sinking, they entered a little glade surrounded by a wilderness of trees and rocks, he doggedly threw himself from his horse and declared that he could not ride a step farther.

"How far are we from Mr. Wilson's?" he asked.

"A matter of sixty or seventy miles, mebbe," replied Zeke.

"Well, that added to eighty makes a hundred and forty or fifty miles that I have ridden on horseback during the last three days," groaned Guy. "An iron boy couldn't stand more. I dont see the need of so much haste anyhow."

"Thar was need of it," said Zeke, "but I reckon we're out of danger now."

Guy not being aware that they had been in any danger, could not imagine what Zeke meant; but he was too tired to ask any questions.

"I reckon we'd best stop here two or three days an' take a good rest and hunt," continued Zeke. "I'll give you some lessons in shootin' and throwin' the lasso. It won't take me long to learn you to be jest as good a hunter as I am; an' if thar's any a-goin' that can beat me, I never seed 'em. Now lay down an' I'll go out an' shoot something fur supper."

"I don't want any supper," said Guy. "All I want is rest and sleep. If the second mate of the Santa Maria had been pounding me with a rope's end for an hour, I couldn't be any nearer used up than I am now."

Zeke became very officious all at once. He raked together a pile of leaves under the shelter of a huge rock, placed Guy's saddle at one end of it for a pillow, and when the boy had stretched his weary limbs upon the couch thus hastily made up for him, the hunter threw his poncho and blanket over his shoulders, and tucked them snugly about him. Before the operation was completed Guy was sound asleep.

He slept in blissful ignorance of what was passing near him. Once he thought that the blankets were pulled

cautiously off his shoulders and a hand thrust into his pocket; but so firmly were his senses locked in slumber that he was not fairly aroused by these movements. He knew nothing for twelve long hours, and then he was awakened by the neighing of a horse.

He started up feeling very much refreshed, but almost dropped back upon his bed again when he saw that his monk-bag had been turned inside out and was resting on his breast.

His pockets, too, had been pulled out, and some of the articles they had contained were missing, while others were scattered about over the ground. His rifle, game-bag and blankets had disappeared, and even Zeke and his horse were nowhere to be seen.

There were no signs that the hunter had kindled a fire during the night. He must have robbed Guy and made off as soon as the latter was fairly asleep. All he had left him was the clothes he had on his back, the horse he had ridden, and the saddle and bridle.

Guy realized his situation the instant his eyes were fairly opened. Utterly discouraged at last, he threw himself back upon the ground, wishing from the bottom of his heart that he was dead.

"I've been robbed! I've been robbed!" he kept saying to himself. "And here I am in these mountains without a bite to eat or a friend to help me! What shall I do! what shall I do!"

Guy lay for fully an hour in a sort of stupor, from which he was aroused at last by the pangs of hunger. There was no need that he should stay there and starve, he told himself, while Zeke had been considerate enough to leave him a horse. Perhaps the animal could carry him to some human habitation. The experiment was at least worth a trial.

The horse proved to be very uneasy, and Guy, being unaccustomed to such business, was nearly half an hour in putting the saddle and bridle on him. But at last he got everything fixed to his satisfaction, and climbing upon the animal's back, he started—he knew not whither.

After trying in vain to find a road or trail leading from the glade, he plunged blindly into the woods, and during the next two days lived in a state of agony, both of body and mind, that I cannot describe. He rode while daylight lasted without a mouthful to eat, and slept at night on the hard ground.

Sometimes he would allow his horse to have his own way, believing that the animal's instinct would lead him out of the wilderness, and then again he would resume control of him, and try to find his own way out.

How often during those two days did Guy tell himself that if he lived to get out of that scrape he would lose not an hour in starting for the States; and if he once reached them he would never again be tempted to leave them.

He had seen enough of the woods, and of the ocean, too. Other boys might think as they pleased, and story-tellers might write as they pleased about the joys, the ease and romance of a hunter's and a sailor's life, but as for him, give him a quiet home on shore and among civilized people.

At last, when Guy was so weak with fasting that he could scarcely keep his seat in the saddle, and so disheartened that he was more than once on the point of throwing himself under the nearest tree and resigning himself to his fate, his deliverance came, and so suddenly that it almost took his breath away. His horse, which during the last few hours had been allowed to go where he pleased, plunged through an almost impassable thicket of bushes, carrying his rider into a broad, well-beaten road that led down the mountains.

The animal seemed as delighted at this evidence of civilization as Guy did. No sooner was he fairly in the road than he broke into a gallop, and in less than five minutes brought his rider to a little tumble-down shanty, where half a dozen miners were lounging on the porch. They all started up and looked at Guy in amazement, seemingly unable to make up their minds whether he was a live boy or a ghost.

"Halloo!" exclaimed one of the men, "who on earth are you, and where did you come from?"

"I have been lost in the mountains for the last two days, and am almost starved to death," answered Guy, in a faint voice.

"Well, I should say you were, if one can judge by your looks. Come in. Such as we've got you're welcome to."

The man approached to assist Guy to dismount, and it was well he did so, for he was just in time to receive him in his arms. The boy was utterly overcome with weakness, and when he tried to swing himself from his saddle his head reeled, and he would have fallen to the ground if the man had not supported him.

"He's pretty near gone up," said one of the miners, "but I guess a bit of something will bring him around all right."

The speaker secured Guy's horse, another assisted him into the house and seated him on a bench, a third brought from a cupboard an abundant supply of bread and meat, which he placed before him, and the others stood around, waiting with no little curiosity and impatience to hear his story.

The miners had seen any number of hungry men since they had been in the mountains, but that was the first time they had ever seen food disappear so rapidly before a boy of Guy's size. The latter was perfectly ravenous. He stopped at last, not because he had eaten enough, but because his host interfered and took away the eatables.

"Thar, now," said the man, "you've stowed away about enough of that grub for this time, and you had better let up or you'll bust."

"I am busted already," said Guy, wiping his lips; "busted and disgusted."

"Broke?" asked the man.

"Flat as a pancake," said Guy. "I am very grateful for your kindness, sir, and am sorry I cannot in some way repay it. I am able to go on now, and would be

glad if you would show me the nearest road to the States."

"Going to leave Californy?"

"Just as fast as horse-flesh can carry me."

"But how did you come to get lost?"

Guy's story was a short one, and was soon told. Some of the miners seemed to believe it, while others looked a little incredulous. But Guy did not care for that. He had the best of evidence that every word he uttered was the truth.

While he was telling his story a horseman drew up before the shanty, and dismounting, proceeded to give Guy's steed a good looking over, closely examining a brand on the animal's flank, and referring occasionally to a note-book which he drew from his pocket. The miners watched every move he made, now and then exchanging winks with one another, and looking toward Guy in a way the latter could not understand.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GUY BECOMES A TEAMSTER.

"HICH of you owns this horse," asked the man at length, thrusting his head in at the door.

The question was addressed to the party in general but the man fastened his eyes upon Guy as if expecting an answer from him.

"He is in my possession," said the boy, "but he belongs to Zeke."

"Zeke! Zeke who?"

"I don't know his other name. He is a buffalo hunter, and has just started for Kansas."

"Where did he get him, do you know?"

"He bought him of somebody down in San Joaquin."

"Yes; well, that story won't go down, young man," said the new-comer, who was an officer of the law. "That horse was *stolen* down in San Joaquin a few days ago."

"Oho!" exclaimed Guy's host, "that accounts for the milk in the cocoanut."

"I thought all the time that there was something streaked about this business," observed another.

"Ain't he a desperate one, though," remarked a third. "He steals a horse and is so determined to keep him that he stays in the mountains until he is almost starved to death."

"Oh, now, you don't know what you are talking about," cried Guy, who was frightened almost out of his senses. "I didn't steal that horse. I got him just as I told you I did."

The constable listened while Guy repeated the story of his two days' acquaintance with the buffalo hunter, and when it was concluded gave it as his opinion that

the boy's statements would hardly wash. He might be all right—he was free to confess that Guy didn't look like a horse-thief—but he had been instructed to detain that animal if he found him, and to put whoever had him in his possession into the calaboose and keep him there until the owner of the horse could be sent for; so Guy had better come along and be locked up and say no more about it.

Guy remonstrated loudly, but it was all in vain. The officer was firm, and the boy was obliged to accompany him down the mountain and through the little village that lay at its foot, to the calaboose—a small, strongly built log cabin, provided with a heavy oaken door and grated windows. There was but room in the building, as Guy found when the door was opened, and just then it had no occupants.

"Now, then," said the officer giving his prisoner a push, "go in there, and stay till the rope comes up from San Joaquin. We hang horse-thieves in this country."

This was the second time Guy had been made the victim of the man he had trusted so implicitly. He understood his situation as well as if Zeke had been there to explain it to him. The hunter, not daring to rob him in the settlements for fear that Mr. Wilson would interest himself in the matter, had enticed him into the mountains, where he could accomplish his purpose without danger to himself. He had stolen the horse for Guy to ride, and then, in order to draw suspicion from himself, had left him in the boy's possession, well-knowing that if he showed himself in the settlements during the day-time, he would be arrested and charged with the theft. And horse-thieves were hanged in that country, so the constable had told him! If the man said this to frighten him, he certainly succeeded in his object. Almost overcome with terror at the bare thought, Guy threw himself upon a dirty mattress in one corner of the jail and cried bitterly, until exhausted nature gave way and he forgot his troubles in sleep.

He slept until it was almost dark, and was then awakened by the sound of voices. He started up to find the door of his prison open, and the entrance crowded with excited, struggling men. Conspicuous among them was a gigantic fellow, clad like a miner, whose wrists and ankles were loaded with irons. The others were trying to push him into the jail, and he was trying as hard to prevent them. Incumbered as he was he fought desperately for his liberty, and once seemed almost on the point of escaping from his captors, but he was at last thrown headlong upon the floor of the calaboose, and the door was slammed behind him.

Guy's companion in misery acted more like a wild beast than a human being. No sooner had he gained his feet than he threw himself with all his strength against the door; but seeing that he made no impression upon it, he turned his attention to one of the windows, seizing the bars with his hands and exerting all his strength to tear them from their fastenings.

Failing in this, he drew himself up by the bars of the window and butted his head against the logs which formed the ceiling, but nothing gave way under his fierce attacks, and finding at last that escape was impossible he fell to pacing the narrow jail, rattling his chains and swearing and threatening at the top of his voice.

Guy was afraid of him. Slowly and cautiously he drew himself off the mattress, and retreated into the farthest corner of the room, where he sat cowering and trembling and watching the movements of this wild beast in human form, who continued to pace backward and forward, clanking his chains and uttering imprecations. Guy was glad indeed when the night settled down and concealed him from the man's sight.

At last a murmur of voices outside the building attracted the attention of the prisoner, who paused in his walk and gazed eagerly toward the door, bending forward in a listening attitude. The noise grew louder and louder. Then a short struggle was heard outside the

cabin, the door flew open, admitting a flood of light which streamed from a dozen lanterns, and a crowd of armed men rushed in. They seized the prisoner, wound a rope about his neck, and in spite of his resistance pulled him out of the calaboose.

Guy, hardly realizing what was going on, was borne with the crowd, which filled every corner of the jail, out through the door, past the constable, who was lying bound and helpless beside the building, and up the road leading to the mountains. Then somebody pushed him roughly aside, and he found himself standing alone. He was free, the road was open, and he could go where he pleased.

Frightened as he was, Guy was prompt to seize upon the opportunity for escape thus unexpectedly offered to him. Very slowly and deliberately he drew himself further away from the crowd, and when the last man had passed him and hurried up the mountain, and there was no one in sight to observe his movements, he broke into a run and made the best of his way through the now deserted village and along the road that led to the plains beyond.

He knew something about lynch-law now. He had received an illustration of the manner in which frontiersmen sometimes dealt with offenders, and shivered as if he had the ague when he reflected that the same fate might have been his in a few hours more had not a way been opened for his escape.

"I'll not stay in this country an hour longer," thought Guy, speeding along the road as if he had been furnished with wings. "I had no idea that there were such men as these in the world. I wonder if that constable saw me when I came out? I thought he looked me squarely in the face, and if he did, he must have recognized me. If they will only keep him tied hard and fast until morning, I don't think he will ever catch me again. Halloo! Great Scott!"

This exclamation was called forth by an unexpected sight which just then met his eyes. It was a camp-fire,

and he did not see it until he was close upon it. Two covered wagons were drawn up in front of the fire, and beside one of them stood a stalwart fellow in his shirt-sleeves, who was looking ruefully at a broken axle-tree and scratching his head in deep perplexity. Discovering Guy as he came up, he greeted him with:

"Halloo! stranger. May be you're a wagon-maker."

"No, I am not," replied the boy.

"Then I don't suppose you could hold up one end of this rail for me while I fix this axle, could you?" asked the emigrant.

"Yes," said Guy, "I can do that."

After casting a long and anxious glance down the road he had just traveled to make sure that there was no one following him, Guy walked up to the wagon and held one end of the rail, as the man requested, making several suggestions as the work progressed, which the emigrant was prompt to adopt, and which led him to say when the repairs were all completed:

"Now, stranger, may be you would be willing to set up and take a bite with us. Supper's ready."

Guy was not only willing, but eager. The sense of security he had felt since his arrival in the emigrant's camp, aided by the savory odor of the viands that were cooking over the coals, had put a sharp edge on his appetite, and he did full justice to the meal that was served up. While he was eating he had leisure to look about him and to examine into something that had attracted his notice when he first entered the camp. There were some words painted in large letters on one of the wagon covers, and after a little study, Guy made them out to be, "Sonora or Bust."

He read the words over slowly while he was munching his corn bread and bacon, and then turned his attention to the emigrant's family, on whom he had thus far bestowed only a passing glance.

There were eight of them—two women and six children; and as both the women were addressed as mother, Guy thought there ought to be another man about the

camp; but as he did not put in an appearance, he finally asked after him.

"Where is your partner?" said he to the emigrant.

"You ask that question, I suppose, because you see two families here," replied the man. "One of them is mine, and the other was my brother's. He is dead, and so I have his wife and little ones to care for till I get them back among their friends."

Guy helped himself to another piece of bacon and looked up at the words that were painted on the wagon cover.

"Did you get through, or bust?" said he.

"Both," replied the emigrant. "I came through all right, and busted afterward. My brother, he died, the placer diggings give out, so that Californy ain't worth staying in, and now I want to get back to Missouri, where I came from, before I am clean broke. These women folks can't drive horses—this is the third time they have run into stumps and rocks, and broke that wagon down, between here and Sonora—and I'll give any man ten dollars a month that's a mind to set up there and drive for us."

"Are you going straight to the States?" asked Guy.

"Just as straight as the nearest trail runs."

"Then I'm your man. I'll drive one wagon for you."

"Talk enough," said the emigrant. "I can rest easy now. That miserable wagon has been more bother to me than it is worth."

And so the matter was settled, and Guy became a teamster and a member of the emigrant's family.

For the next three months he led a dreary, monotonous life, during which not a single incident happened that was worth recording. He arose from his blankets at daybreak, ate a breakfast of corn bread and bacon, and then climbed to his seat in the wagon, where he remained, with the exception of an hour's halt at noon, until long after dark. Even this work was hard, and the longer it continued the more disgusted with frontier life Guy became, and the firmer grew his resolution,

that if he ever lived to get among civilized people again, he would stay among them. The journey, like the voyage around the Horn, seemed endless, but at last, to his immense relief, Omaha appeared in sight.

By this time Guy had made up his mind what he was going to do. From the emigrants he met on the road he learned that the States were at war, that one portion of the Union was in arms against the other, and that men were wanted on both sides.

This seemed almost a godsend to Guy, for it settled a question which he had long been revolving in his mind, namely: What should he do for a living? He would go into the Union army. He would save every cent of the money he earned during his term of service, and if he lived to come out, he would have enough to enable him to take a course at some commercial college, and thus fit himself for business. He was a boy of peace—he had no taste for fights and broils—but he must do something to earn a livelihood, and this seemed to be just what he wanted.

When they reached Omaha Guy was paid off by his employer, receiving thirty-five dollars in money, and after taking leave of him and his family, he started at once for the levee. Finding there a steamer bound for St. Louis, he shipped on it as deck hand. He could not afford to go as passenger, for his clothes were almost in tatters, and he needed the little money he had to purchase a respectable outfit when he reached St. Louis.

The steamer arrived at the city early one morning, and Guy having received his wages, bent his steps toward the nearest clothing store, and when he came out again, half an hour afterward, he looked more like Guy Harris than he had looked for many a long day. He had purchased a neat, durable suit of clothing, and still had a few dollars left in his pocket. He was not ashamed now to show himself on the principal streets.

The first thing was to get a good breakfast, and the next to hunt up an officer to enlist him. There was a restaurant close by, and while he was eating a dish

of ham and eggs, and drinking a cup of coffee, he talked with the proprietor, who directed him to the nearest recruiting office. It was on Fourth Street, the man said, and Guy having paid his bill started out to find it.

Guy felt now as if he were among friends from whom he had long been separated. He was delighted to find himself among the sights and sounds of the city again, and not a single incident that happened as he passed along the street did he regard as too trifling to be noticed.

He had now been adrift in the world nearly fifteen months, and during this time he had seldom thought of his home and those he had left there. It is true that when he was in trouble he had wished himself safe under his father's roof once more, just as a storm-tossed mariner wishes himself back to the comfortable haven he left a few days ago; but if he had ever thought of his father and his father's wife, it was with a feeling of bitterness which seemed to grow stronger and deeper as he grew older. He thought of them now, but without a single pang of regret or a single longing in his heart to see them. The world had treated him harshly since he had been out in it; but which was the worst, he asked himself—to receive hard words and hard usage from those of whom he had a right to expect nothing better, or to submit to daily exhibitions of indifference and partiality, and acts of petty tyranny and injustice from those of whom he had a right to expect nothing but encouragement, sympathy and love? Guy asked himself this question, and a hard expression settled about the corners of his mouth, which did not soften when he suddenly discovered among the numerous pedestrians one whom he thought he had seen before. It was a tall, dignified gentleman, who was just at that moment crossing the street, evidently with the intention of intercepting him. Guy stared at him in amazement. *It was his father!*

CHAPTER XXIV.

FATHER AND SON.

GUY COULD scarcely believe his eyes. His father was the last man on earth he had expected to see in St. Louis—the last one he wanted to meet, if the truth must be told—and he hoped that he was mistaken.

But the approaching gentleman was really Mr. Harris—there could be no doubt about that; for, as far as his personal appearance was concerned, he had not changed in a single particular since Guy last saw him. His face wore the same fierce frown, before which the boy had so often trembled, and which seemed habitual to him, and he carried himself as stiffly as ever. But he came up with some eagerness in his manner, and for once appeared to be glad to see his son.

"Guy!" said he, seizing the boy's outstretched hand and speaking with more cordiality than he had ever before thrown into his tones when addressing him.

"Father!" replied Guy.

"How do you do?" said Mr. Harris. "When did you arrive here, and where have you been?"

Guy noticed, with some of the old bitterness in his heart, that his father did not say he was glad to meet him, but he was not much surprised at it. He could not recollect that his father had ever exhibited any affection for him. He saved all that for Ned, and Guy was obliged to be contented with the few crumbs that fell to his share in the shape of Christmas presents and a religious book once or twice a year.

"I have just now come from the plains," replied Guy. "I have been to sea since I saw you last."

"To sea!" repeated Mr. Harris—"as a common sailor?"

"Yes, sir. I have made two voyages as a foremast hand, one of them around the Horn. I came from San Francisco overland."

A few minutes' silence followed. The two stood holding fast to each other's hands, and each was busy with his own thoughts. Mr. Harris was running his eyes over Guy's face and figure, and was plainly surprised, and perhaps a little disappointed, to see him so neatly dressed and looking so well.

The conventional runaway always turns up ragged and in a starving condition; but this one looked as though he had been living on the fat of the land. Guy was waiting with some anxiety to hear what his father would have to say next, and wondering if his long separation from him had softened his heart in any degree. At last Mr. Harris spoke.

"I am stopping at the Planter's House," said he. "Come over there with me. I want to talk to you."

As he said this he drew his son's arm through his own and led him away. This movement on his part was a great surprise to Guy. Never before had his father treated him with so much familiarity.

Perhaps he was beginning to see that he had made a woful mistake in keeping the boy at such a distance from him. Had his eyes been opened to this fact eighteen months sooner Guy would never have been a runaway.

Arriving at the Planter's House Mr. Harris led the way to his room, and as he locked the door behind him and handed Guy a chair, the latter felt very much as he had felt in former days when his father had ordered him into the library for some offense he had committed, and followed him there with an apple-tree switch in his hand.

"Are you on your way home, Guy?" asked Mr. Harris as he seated himself in a chair opposite his son.

"No, sir," was the reply. "I came to St. Louis intending to enlist in the army."

"You must not do that, Guy," said his father ear-

nestly. "There are enough beside you to risk their lives in this war. I want you to go back with me. Home is the place for you."

"No, father, I can't do it," said Guy.

"Why not?"

"I have two good reasons. In the first place, I suppose that all my acquaintances know by this time that I ran away from home."

"I suppose they do," said his father, "and that is all the punishment you will have to stand."

"For the opinions of the majority I care nothing. Those who know all the circumstances will not judge me too harshly," said Guy, astonished at the readiness with which he expressed himself. But then his heart was full of this matter. He had thought of it often and words came easy to him.

Mr. Harris elevated his eyebrows and looked surprised.

"Yes, sir," continued Guy, who easily read the thoughts that were passing in his father's mind. "I mean to say that every man and woman in Norwall who is intimate with our family will tell you to-day, if they tell you anything, that I had good reason for wishing to leave home. I never saw a moment's peace there in my life."

"Then why did you not come to me like a man and say so, instead of sneaking away like a thief in the night?" asked Mr. Harris with all the old sternness in his voice.

"I knew better. I did not care to put myself in the way of a whipping, and that is all the satisfaction I should have got."

Whatever may have been Mr. Harris' other faults, he was not dishonest. He did not deny this—he could not, so he hastened to change the subject.

"What was the reason you were not happy at home?" he asked. "Ned seems to enjoy himself very well."

"I suppose he does," returned Guy bitterly. "He has a father and mother who try to make home pleasant

for him. Any boy can enjoy himself under such circumstances."

"Didn't you have all you wanted to eat, and drink, and wear?"

"Yes, sir; but is that all a boy wants to make him happy? No, indeed. He wants a kind word now and then. He likes to be told once in a while that there is some good in him, and that he is not altogether wicked and depraved. He wants privileges occasionally, not those granted with hesitation and grumbling and cautions innumerable, for he cannot enjoy them, but those which are extended willingly and smilingly, as if the parent found as much pleasure in giving as the boy does in receiving them. He wants somebody who will love him, and who is not ashamed to show it. Where is Henry Stewart?" asked Guy suddenly.

"He is still at home," replied Mr. Harris, "studying hard to fit himself for college. Mr. Stewart seems to be particularly blessed in his children. Henry is a model boy. He never does anything behind his father's back that he would be ashamed to do before his face."

"And what is the reason?" asked Guy.

"I don't know, I am sure. I suppose it is nature."

"Yes, the nature of the boy has a good deal to do with his behavior, of course, but believe me, father, when I say that the parents have a great deal to do with it, too," said Guy earnestly. "If you will go into Mr. Stewart's yard some night and watch his family through the window, as I did on one occasion, the mystery will be solved in two minutes' time. Henry can't help being a good boy, because he has a good home. It isn't what he has to eat and drink and wear that makes him so, either."

"Well, have you been so much happier since you have been out in the world than you were at home?"

"I have been so much better satisfied that I don't want to go back," replied Guy.

"Have you never regretted your rash act? Have you never wanted to see us?"

"Yes, sir, to both your questions. I wished myself at home a good many times during the first three months I was away, not because I was sorry I had left it, but because I was disheartened by the misfortunes I met with and the abuse I received from some of those with whom I came in contact. The world isn't what I expected to find it by any means. I have been cured of a good many foolish notions since I left home."

"You must have had some plan in your head when you ran away," said Harris. "What did you expect to do?"

"I intended to become a hunter," said Guy, with some hesitation.

"There!" exclaimed his father, suddenly brightening. "I have at last reached the root of the matter. Don't you see now that my judgment was better than yours? If you had respected my wishes and let those miserable works of fiction alone, you would have saved yourself a great deal of trouble. Be honest now. Confess that the only reason why you left home was because you got some wild idea into your head from those books."

"I have already told you why I left home, and why I don't want to go back," said Guy. "If works of fiction are such awful things, how does it come that Henry Stewart is so good a boy? He has a whole library of such books, and he doesn't have to hide away in the carriage-house or attic to read them either, as I did. I don't deny that the stories I read had something to do with my choice of an occupation, but I do deny that they had anything to do with my leaving home. The home itself was the cause of that. It was such a gloomy, dismal place, that I couldn't stay there. But I've had enough of life on the frontier and on the ocean wave. It is all well enough to sit down by a comfortable fire in an easy-chair, and read about the imaginary adventures that fall to the lot of hunters and sailors who never existed, but when one comes to follow the business, he finds that it is a different matter altogether."

"Well, what are you going to do here in St. Louis?" asked Mr. Harris.

"I don't know. I must find work of some kind, and that very soon, for I have but a few dollars left. I know nothing of business, consequently if I went into a store I should have to accept the lowest position, which would not bring me enough to board and clothe myself. The only way I can see is to enlist. I shall save every cent of my money—I think I know the value of it—and when my term of service expires, I shall have enough to enable me to take a course at the Commercial College. Perhaps after that I can find some paying situation."

"You must not go into the service, Guy," said Mr. Harris. "I should never expect to see you again. I can give you something to do."

Guy opened his lips to decline this proposition without waiting to hear more about it. The thought of working under his father's supervision was most distasteful to him—indeed, it could not be entertained for a moment. He could not bear to meet, every hour in the day, that stern, gloomy man, who never smiled. But Mr. Harris went on without giving him time to speak.

"I have prospered since the war begun," said he. "I have had two profitable government contracts, and have established a business house in this city. Mr. Walker, who is now my partner, has charge of it. I will step around and see him about it, and perhaps we can make some satisfactory arrangements, if you will promise to keep out of the service."

"But, father," said Guy, "do you live here in this city?"

"No; I have charge of our business in Norwall. I go back there by this evening's train. What do you say?"

"I shall be grateful for any work that will bring me my board and clothes, and will promise to keep out of the service," said Guy.

"Suppose you come around here and take dinner with me at three o'clock. I shall then be able to tell you what arrangements Mr. Walker and myself have made."

"Very well, sir," said Guy.

Mr. Harris arose to his feet, and Guy taking this as a

hint that he wished the interview brought to a close, picked up his hat and left the room.

"Thank goodness, it is over at last," said he, drawing a long breath of relief. "I didn't say half I meant to have said, and I am glad I didn't, for I could see that he felt badly. I didn't want to hurt his feelings, but at the same time I wanted to let him see how impossible it is for me to go back to Norwall with him. I shall always remember that interview, for it is an event in my life. *It is the first time I ever spent half an hour in private with my father without getting a scolding or a whipping.* He was distant enough, mercy knows, but still he was kinder and more cordial than I ever knew him to be before. Why didn't he exhibit a little of that spirit years ago? I would have done anything for him that I could do."

"I never in my life heard of such impudence," soliloquized Mr. Harris, as he paced up and down his room after Guy's departure. "It was all I could do to keep my hands off that boy. He had the audacity to tell me to my face that I and his mother are the cause of his wrong-doing—that we made his home so unpleasant for him that he couldn't stay there. If that is the case what is the reason Ned doesn't run away? Guy must be demented. That bosh he used to read so much has turned his head."

How very unwilling we are to confess ourselves in fault for any unhappiness that befall us—it is so much easier to lay the blame upon somebody else. Said a father in my hearing, not long ago, while speaking of a reckless, dissolute son who had caused him a world of trouble:

"Tom always was a peculiar boy. I never could understand him. He seemed to prefer any place on earth to his home, and he never would stay there if he could go anywhere else. Why it was so I am sure I don't know. I tried my best to do my duty by him, and it is a great comfort to me now in my old age to know that nobody can tell me I spoiled him by sparing the rod. I

was as strict with him as a father could be. When he was not at school I shut him up inside the yard to keep him out of the company of bad boys. I never allowed him to go to a theater or circus, but made him read his Bible every day and learn a portion of the New Testament every night before he went to bed. In the evening, as soon as the gas was lighted, I compelled him to bring out his school-books and study them until nine o'clock. I exercised the strictest supervision over his reading, and burned every story paper, novel, book of travel, and trash of that sort that he brought into the house. I saw that he was regular in his attendance at church and Sunday-school, and on Sunday afternoons never permitted him to touch any books or papers except those of a religious character. In short, I tried to keep his mind so fully occupied with good and useful things that wicked and trifling ones could find no place in it. And how has my kindness been returned?" added the father sorrowfully. "Tom run away from home when the war broke out, and has never been near me since. He is now among those rough characters on the border, and if everything I hear is true, he is one of the worst of them. How a bad man can come from such a home as Tom had in his boyhood, is a mystery to me."

But it was no mystery to *me*, for I had heard the other side of the story. A few weeks previous to this, while on my way to visit some friends in the East, it was my fortune to meet this same Tom in a distant State. I could scarcely recognize in him the innocent, meek-appearing boy I had known in years gone by. He was dressed in a red shirt, thrown open at the throat, coarse trousers thrust into a pair of high-top boots, and a tattered slouch hat which he wore cocked over his left ear. In a belt which encircled his waist he carried a navy six-shooter and a monstrous bowie-knife, both of which had been used with terrible effect in more than one personal encounter. He was a swaggering, swearing, boastful, dissipated fellow, and always seemed on the lookout for a chance to pick a quarrel with some one.

"You're going home, Harry," said he, as he grasped my hand at parting, "and I wish you joy of your visit. Would to Heaven I had a home to go to."

"You have, Tom," said I, "and your father would be glad to see you."

"Don't talk to me in that way," he said, almost fiercely. "I know there is a house in an Eastern town where I used to stay when I was a boy, because I could go nowhere else, where I found shelter, food and clothing, and was daily strapped and scolded, but does that constitute a *home?* If it does, you writers and poets are all liars. You tell us home is a place around which one's warmest affections cluster—a place consecrated by a mother's presence, by her prayers and holy tears, whose sacred influence goes with us through life, and whose pleasant memories come thronging upon us when the tempter is near to keep us from being led astray. Such is the home of my dreams, but it is one I never knew and never shall know. I never knew a mother's love, but was early made acquainted with the weight of a father's hand. He was such a tyrant that I never could breathe easy in his presence. He denied me every boyish privilege and indulgence, and brought me up so strictly that I learned to despise everything good simply because he liked it. I hated the Sabbath, I hated the Bible, being held to so unreasonably strict an observance to the one, and so often compelled against my wishes to commit to memory whole pages of the other. I resolved, as far back as I can remember, that if I could once free myself from home, I'd see life and make up for lost time, and you know as well as I can tell you how I have kept that resolution. I am sorry for it now, but it is too late. I can't live my life over again. I have come to such a pass that nobody cares for me."

Tom's under lip begun to quiver and his eyes to fill with tears. Ashamed of the weakness, he dashed his hand across his face, uttered an oath under his breath and swaggered off to the nearest saloon. What will his

end be? The rope of a vigilance committee, or the bullet of some fellow desperado?

Parents, it is a serious matter to send a boy into the world with no pleasant recollections of yourselves or of home to restrain him in the hour of temptation.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELER.

ELL, GUY, which way shall we go to-night? Do you feel inclined for a game of billiards before supper?"

The speaker adjusted his hat in front of a looking-glass, drew a stray lock of hair over one of his ears, turned his head from side to side to assure himself that his toilet had been completed, and looked over his shoulder toward Guy Harris, who, having just rendered to the book-keeper an account of the cash that had passed through his hands during the day, was buttoning his coat preparatory to leaving the store. The question was asked in a low tone and was accompanied by a side-long glance toward Mr. Walker, who was standing at the book-keeper's desk.

"I don't know," replied Guy hesitatingly. "I've been out a good deal of late, and I think I had better begin to stop at home once in a while of an evening."

"Oh, nonsense!" exclaimed the first speaker, whom we will call Jones, and who was one of the drummers or commercial travelers employed to sell goods for the firm of Harris & Walker. "What is the use of moping in the house all the while? When one has been hard at work all day he wants some recreation in the evening, I take it."

"I know that," said Guy, "but to tell the truth, Jones, I don't get as much money for my services at you do, and I can't stand this 'bumming round' as you call it."

"Funds giving out? Then run your face."

"I have been doing just that very thing. I am deeply in debt, too."

"Oh, that's nothing when you get used to it. Show

me a clerk in this city who is not in debt, and I will show you five that are."

"But my creditors want me to pay up; at least I judge so from the way they are beginning to look at me every time I see them."

"Well, if they become impatient, just say to them that if they get the money before you do, you would be pleased to know it. Are you all ready? If you are, come on. I have only this evening and one more that I can spend with you, for I must start off on my travels again early on Wednesday morning.

This conversation took place one Monday evening in the store in which Guy was employed, and about two months subsequent to the events recorded in the last chapter. In accordance with his promise Mr. Harris consulted with his new partner, Mr. Walker, and the result of the conference was that Guy was employed to do the outdoor business of the firm—to act as city collector and shipping clerk, at a salary of four hundred dollars a year. His working hours were from eight o'clock in the morning until six at night, with an hour's intermission at noon for dinner. His evenings were at his own disposal.

This last was an arrangement with which Mr. Harris was not altogether pleased. He knew by experience the manifold temptations which beset those who live in large cities, and believed there was something in the night air morally injurious to young people; but he thought that perhaps Guy had learned the value of time and money during his wanderings, and hoped that his evenings would be devoted, as he said he intended to devote them, to the acquirement of the rudiments of a business education. To further this end Mr. Harris purchased for Guy a scholarship at the Commercial College, and he also found lodgings for him at a small boarding-house kept by a widow lady in a retired part of the city.

For a month no fault could be found with Guy. He was as steady as an old coach-horse. He had learned to

appreciate the privileges and comforts of civilized life, and knew how to enjoy them. Having been made aware of his deficiencies, he applied himself manfully to the task of overcoming them. He was always on hand during business hours, and performed his duty faithfully. Mr. Walker began to take a deep interest in him, and sent encouraging reports to Norwall concerning him.

"Guy is a splendid fellow!" so Mr. Walker, who was the only one in the city acquainted with his clerk's past history, wrote to his partner. "He is very industrious and painstaking, and a word of encouragement or approval stimulates him to extra exertions. You know I always thought he was a good boy."

Guy's landlady, Mrs. Willis, also took a wonderful interest in him; he looked and acted, she said, so much like her own son, who had gone to California to better his fortune. Guy appreciated every little kindness she showed him, and learned to love her as devotedly as he had once loved his father's wife.

But Guy's goodness was rather of the negative sort. He did nothing very wrong, simply because he was never tempted. Everything was going smoothly with him. He was aiming high now, had formed resolutions which he had not yet had time to forget; his whole mind was occupied with the duties of his new vocation, and it is easy to work and be good under such circumstances. But time makes changes, and soon Guy begun to learn that even a shipping clerk has troubles and perplexities, which, in their way, are just as vexatious and hard to bear as those that fall to the lot of other people. The routine of the store, the performing of the same duties over and over again, became tiresome to him; it was too much like a tread-mill. When night came, his mind as well as his body was weary, and he was in no condition to dip into the mysteries of double-entry bookkeeping, or wrestle with the hard problems in Bryant & Stratton's Mercantile Arithmetic. This led him to become irregular in his attendance at the college, and he

begun to spend his leisure hours at home. Reading and conversation with Mrs. Willis interested him for a few evenings, but became a bore at last, and Guy fell into the habit of strolling out after supper for a breath of fresh air; and to enable him to enjoy it fully, he almost always smoked a cigar.

The place at which he purchased his cigars was a beer saloon, and after a few visits Guy found that it was the headquarters of half a dozen dashing young fellows, clerks like himself, who spent all their evenings there. They would come in after supper, singly and in couples, take a glass of beer or cigar at the bar, and then pass out of sight through a door that led into a back room.

Acquaintances are easily made in places like this—more is the pity—and Guy very soon got into the habit of nodding to these young fellows every time he met them; then one of them treated him to a cigar, and asked him if he wouldn't "step back and take a hand." Guy, who had often wondered what there was in the back room that brought those clerks there so regularly, replied in the affirmative, and following them through the door just spoken of, found that it led into an apartment devoted to pigeon-hole, dominoes and cards.

The acquaintances Guy formed that night ripened rapidly into a sort of friendship. He became a regular visitor at the saloon, and although he was a remarkably lucky card player, and was seldom "put in" for a game, the money he had carefully saved during the time he had been employed in the store—and it amounted to a respectable sum—slipped through his fingers almost before he knew it, and at last he had not a single dollar remaining. One night he surprised his new friends by seating himself near the card-table, but declined to take part in the game.

"What's the matter?" they all asked at once.

"Why, I might be beaten, and if I do I have no money to pay the bill. I forget my pocket-book," said Guy, ashamed to acknowledge that he did not own a cent in the world.

"Is that all?" cried one of the players. "That's easily enough got over. Say, Jake," he added, calling to the proprietor of the saloon, "if Harris gets stuck for this game, you'll chalk it, won't you?"

"Oh, sure," replied the Dutchman readily. "I drusts him all de peer he vants."

The boy had been a good customer, and he could afford to accommodate him to a limited extent.

This was a new chapter in Guy's experience. He had never thought of going in debt before, and ere many weeks had passed away he had reason to wish that no one had ever thought of it for him.

About the time Guy first met these new friends he made the acquaintance of Mr. Jones, the commercial traveler, who was presented to him by his brother, Will Jones, the junior clerk. These two young gentlemen, Mr. Jones and his brother, had private reasons for hating Guy most cordially. Will had been an applicant for the position of shipping clerk, and indeed Mr. Walker had partly promised it to him; but yielding to the wishes of his partner, he gave Guy the situation instead, and made Jones junior clerk, with the promise of something better as soon as there was an opening.

Will, of course, was highly enraged. Being rather a fast young man, he had got deeply in debt, and needed the extra hundred and fifty dollars—in his subordinate position he received but two hundred and fifty—to satisfy his creditors, who were becoming impatient. His brother, the commercial traveler, was absent selling goods for the firm, and not knowing what else to do, Will wrote him a full account of his troubles, and ended by begging the loan of a few dollars. The commercial traveler replied as follows:

"You have been shamefully treated. That place was promised to you, and you shall have it if I die for it; but I can't lend you any money. You ought to have better sense than to ask me, for I have often told you that my commission does not begin to support me. If it were not for my other business, I should be in a hard

row of stumps directly. Smoke fewer cigars and drink less beer till I come, and I'll see what can be done. In the meantime watch Harris—watch him so closely that you can tell me every one of his habits. If I can get a hold on him I'll have him out of that store, no matter if he is the son of the senior partner."

In accordance with these instructions, the object of which Will fully comprehended, he set himself to act as a spy upon the shipping clerk, and every movement that young gentleman made during business hours and afterward, was carefully noted.

At first Will saw nothing encouraging in Guy's behavior, for his habits bore the strictest investigation; but from the time he got into the way of going to Dutch Jake's saloon for cigars and beer, the spy collected abundant evidence against him. When the commercial traveler returned he listened with interest to the story his brother had to tell, and when it was finished said:

"Then Harris drinks beer, does he? That's all right. I am certain of success."

"But you mustn't put faith in that," said Will. "He never takes too much."

"No matter," said the commercial traveler, "he takes a little, and when alcohol is in, wit is out, always. I will bet you a suit of new clothes that you are shipping clerk in less than a month—provided, of course, that you have been guarded in your own conduct, and given old Walker no reason to distrust you."

At the very first opportunity the commercial traveler was introduced to Guy, and the latter was highly flattered to see that he had made a very favorable impression upon the gentlemanly Mr. Jones. He could not help seeing it, for Mr. Jones did not attempt to conceal his admiration for Guy. He accompanied him on his business tours about the city, dropped in to see him every night, and never appeared to be easy while he was away from him. And Guy was glad to be in his company. He was proud to be seen on the streets with such a well-dressed, elegant young fellow.

"Harris," said Mr. Jones one day, "Mr. Walker tells me that he will not start me out again under two or three weeks, and I must have a home somewhere. If you and your worthy landlady have no objections, I should like to board and room with you. You are a fellow after my own heart, and I like your society."

"I have no objections, certainly," said Guy. "I should be delighted with the arrangement. Go home and take supper with me to-night, and I will propose it to Mrs. Willis."

Of course Mr. Jones jumped at the invitation. He made a favorable impression upon the unsuspecting landlady, as Guy knew he would—he did not see how anybody could help liking Mr. Jones—and the consequence was that he paid a week's board in advance, and was that same evening duly installed in Guy's room.

The intimacy thus formed begun to result disastrously to Guy before two days had passed away. The shipping clerk in his simplicity imagined that his new friend looked up to him as a superior being, while the truth was that Mr. Jones, by skillful handling, was molding him to suit his own purposes. He led Guy into all sorts of extravagance. In the first place he made such a display of his abundant wardrobe that the plain, durable clothing with which the shipping clerk had provided himself, and which he believed to be quite good enough for any young man in his circumstances, begun to look, in the eyes of its owner, rather shabby when compared with the elegant broadcloth suits that Mr. Jones wore every day. He had not money sufficient to buy better, but Mr. Jones had both cheek and credit, and through him Guy was made acquainted with a fashionable tailor on Fourth Street, who, in three day's time, furnished him with an outfit that made his eyes dance with delight, and charged the price of it against Guy on his books. Then, of course, other things had to be purchased to correspond with these new clothes, for coarse pegged boots, cotton gloves, and a felt hat would not look well with a suit of German broadcloth. Guy must have patent leathers,

fine linen, a stove-pipe hat, and imported French kids, all of which were procured from merchants recommended by Mr. Jones, and each of whom expressed himself willing to wait, not only for the amount of that bill, but for any other that Guy might be pleased to run at his store.

In fine, the advent of Mr. Jones produced a wonderful change in Guy's circumstances and feelings in two short weeks. The commercial traveler had a large circle of acquaintances in the city, and Guy was everywhere introduced as the son of the senior member of the well-known and wealthy firm of Harris & Walker, wholesale dry goods merchants, and from being an obscure clerk whom nobody noticed, found himself riding on a high wave of popularity. Elegant young gentlemen touched their hats to him in the streets, and now and then invited him to take a cigar or a glass of wine with them; perfumed and obsequious bar-tenders in gorgeous saloons leaned respectfully over the counter while he gave his orders, and executed them with alacrity; the clerks in a certain "billiard parlor" took particular pains to keep his private cue locked up so that nobody else could get at it, and to see that his favorite four-pocket table was unoccupied when he dropped in at six o'clock to play his regular game; and livery-stable keepers trotted out their best stock, and furnished him with their finest carriages when he wished to go out riding of a Sunday afternoon.

For the first time in the whole course of his existence Guy was "seeing life," and that, too, without a cent in his pocket. He was bewildered, intoxicated with pleasure, and there was but one thing to throw a cloud over his enjoyments. That was the way his landlady looked at him when he came down to breakfast in the morning with trembling hands, and red and swollen eyes, and declined to take anything more than a cup of coffee. On such occasions there was an expression on the good lady's face that cut Guy to the heart, and somehow always led to the mortifying reflection that for the last six weeks he had not paid her a cent for his board. Then he would seem for the moment to come to his senses; but the

observant Mr. Jones was always ready to step in and nip in the bud any resolutions of amendment he might make. As they walked toward the store he would draw a glowing contrast between Guy's present circumstances and his former old-fogy manner of living, and wind up by humming over a verse of doggerel something like the following:

"As we journey through life, let us live by the way,
And our pilgrimage gladden with feasting, not fasting;
Let us banish dull care, and keep sorrow at bay,
For our days are all numbered, and life is not lasting."

His plans were not yet fully matured, and consequently he was not ready for Guy's awakening.

CHAPTER XXVI.

GUY RECEIVES A PROPOSITION.

HE shipping clerk and commercial traveler walked out of the store arm-in-arm, and bent their steps toward a billiard saloon. Mr. Jones talked incessantly. The sober face Guy wore, and the words he had let fall a while ago, were small things in themselves, but much too important to be disregarded, for they were signs of the awakening which was sure to come, but which Mr. Jones, for reasons of his own, wished to postpone for a day or two longer. So he tried to keep up Guy's spirits, and believing that a little assistance might not come amiss, led him into Dutch Jake's saloon, where they had a glass of beer and a cigar apiece, Jones paying for one and Guy treating to the other.

"Chalk it, Jake," said Guy, as he walked around the end of the counter for a match to light his cigar.

"Vell," said the Dutchman with some hesitation, "I shalks dis, but I don't likes dis shalking pisness pooty vell, nohow. You peen shpending monish like plazes, Meester Harris—you know it? Your pill peen running dwo months."

Guy reddened to the roots of his hair. This was a gentle hint that Jake wanted him to pay up, and he had never been dunned before.

"How much do I owe you?" he asked.

"Eight tollars und vorty zents; you know it now."

"Eight dollars and—Great Scott! how can that be?" exclaimed Guy, almost overwhelmed with astonishment. "I haven't been stuck for a game of cards for the last two weeks."

"Vell, it's all fair, every zent!" almost shouted the Dutchman, bringing his fist down on the counter with

a sounding whack. "You dinks I sheats you, py dunder?"

"Oh, now, Jake, you needn't get on the rampage," said Jones, interposing to calm the rising storm. "Guy is not disputing your bill—he is a gentleman. He will pay every cent of it in a few days."

"Veli, dot's all right, put it's petter he bays it pooty gwick. Ven a man gomes here mit vine glose und a vine vatch und shain, und runs me a pill here in mine house von eight tollars und vorty zents, I don't likes dis pisness."

While the Dutchman was talking himself hoarse Guy and his companion beat a hasty retreat. Jones seemed to look upon the matter in the light of an excellent joke, and laughed heartily over it, but Guy said nothing. He was in a very serious frame of mind. He did not in the least enjoy the game of billiards that followed, for his thoughts were full of the unpleasant incident that had just happened. He was learning now what all people who go in debt must learn sooner or later—that a bill, like the snow-ball a boy rolls up to build his mimic fort, accumulates rapidly. He was glad when the game was finished. He and Jones took a cigar at the counter, and were about to move away when the bar-tender beckoned to Guy.

"I don't want you to think hard of me, Harris," said he, leading Guy out of earshot of his companion, "but I just thought that I would suggest to you that perhaps your bill here is rather larger than you think. It has been running five weeks, and we like to have our customers settle up at least once a month."

"How much is it?" asked Guy with as much indifference as he could throw into his tones.

"Only twenty-four dollars. Don't misunderstand me now. I am not dunning you, for I know that you are a thoroughbred, and that you are able to pay it at any moment. I merely wish to call your attention to it."

"I am glad you did," said Guy. "I'll see to it. Good-evening."

Had Guy suddenly been knocked over by some invisible hand he could not have been more amazed. Thirty-two dollars in debt, and several creditors yet to hear from! Had he been asked an hour before to name the sum he owed these two men, he would have said not more than five dollars. He had kept no account of the bills he had run at other places, and if they exceeded his estimate of them in the same proportion that these two did, what would become of him? Where could he raise the money to pay them? He could not bear to think about it. He overtook his companion at the door, and the latter saw very plainly that the awakening had come.

"Well, perhaps it is as well that it should come now as at a later day," soliloquized the commercial traveler. "I've got him just where I want him, and I'll make him a proposition to-night. I have another whole day to operate in before I start out on my travels, and a great deal can be accomplished in that time. How much is it, Guy? Twenty-four dollars! That is less than I thought it would be. Billiards at twenty-five cents a game, and fancy drinks at fifteen cents each count up, you know. When are you going to pay it?"

"I don't know. I can't pay Jake's bill, much less this one."

"Well, now, I say! Look here, my dear fellow, this won't do, you know!" exclaimed Mr. Jones, suddenly stopping in the street and turning a most astonished face toward Guy. "Remember, if you please, that these people to whom I have introduced you are my personal friends, and that I brought you to their notice supposing you to be a gentleman. You *must* pay these bills. My honor is at stake as well as your own, because I introduced you. If you don't do it, your creditors will call upon Mr. Walker."

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Guy, who had never thought of this before.

"Certainly they will," continued Mr. Jones. "And just consider how I should feel under such circum-

stances! I should never dare to look a white man in the face again. I didn't think you were dishonest."

"And I am not, either," returned Guy with spirit. "I should be glad to settle these bills, but how can I do it without money?"

"Oh, that's the trouble, is it? It isn't want of inclination, but a lack of means. Is that it?"

"That's just the way the matter stands," answered Guy.

"Then I ask your pardon," said Mr. Jones, grasping Guy's hand and shaking it cordially. "I misunderstood you. But are you really out of money?" he added, with a look of surprise, although he knew very well that Guy was penniless, and had been for weeks.

"I haven't a red," was the despairing reply.

"Don't let it trouble you. I can remedy that."

"You can!" exclaimed Guy, astonished and delighted.

"Of course. I earn three or four thousand every year, outside of my commission, and in an hour I can explain the mode of operating, so that you can do the same."

"And will you?" asked Guy.

"I will, I assure you. Harris, when I am a friend to a man I am a friend all over. And what is the use of my professing to think so much of you if I am not willing to prove it?"

"You are a friend, indeed," returned Guy with enthusiasm, "and if you will help me out of this scrape I will never go in debt again as long as I live."

"Oh, as to that," said Mr. Jones indifferently, "it doesn't signify. The best of us get short sometimes, and then it is very convenient to have a friend or two who is willing to credit us. All one has to do is to get up a reputation for honesty, and then he can run his face as long as he chooses."

"What is this plan you were speaking of?" asked Guy.

"I will tell you this evening. After supper we will go up to our room, and while we are smoking a cigar we'll have a long, friendly talk."

"Guy did not want any supper. He could think of nothing but his debts and his companion's friendly offer to help him out of them, and he was impatient to learn how his relief was to be accomplished. He urged Jones to reveal the secret at once, but the latter could not be prevailed upon to say more on the subject just then, and Guy was obliged to await his pleasure.

Supper over, the cigars lighted, and the door of their room closed to keep the smoke from going out into the hall where the landlady would be sure to detect it, Guy and the commercial traveler seated themselves, one in the easy chair and the other on the bed, and proceeded to discuss matters.

"In the first place," said Mr. Jones, "in order that I may know just what to do, you must tell me how much you owe, and give me the names of those to whom you are indebted—that is, if you are perfectly willing to do so."

"Of course I am," returned Guy readily. "I will meet your friendly advances half-way. To begin with, there are my bills at Dutch Jake's and the billiard saloon, amounting to thirty-two dollars and forty cents. Then I am indebted thirty dollars to Mrs. Willis, and if I may judge by the way she looks at me now and then, she would be wonderfully pleased if I would pay up."

"Oh, she doesn't need the money," said Jones. "She has a little fortune of her own, and only keeps boarders for company. If she says anything to you, there are plenty of ways to put her off. Tell her that you will settle up as soon as you draw your next quarter's salary."

"That would be a good joke on her, wouldn't it?" said Guy with a forced laugh. "To tell the truth," he added, with some hesitation, "I—that is—you know Mr. Walker allows me to be my own paymaster, and I have already drawn and spent my last quarter's salary. I shall not get a cent of money from the firm for five weeks."

"I am overjoyed to hear it," said Mr. Jones to him-

self. "Things are working better than I thought. I've got you in a tight corner, my lad, and all that is required is a little careful handling to get you in the way of embezzling." Then aloud he said: "That is a very bad state of affairs, Guy. These people must be paid at once."

"I know they ought to be paid, and you said you would put me in the way of doing it."

"So I will. I'll come to that directly. But who else do you owe?"

Guy went on with the list of those to whom he was indebted, checking each one off on the fingers of his left hand as he pronounced his name. Jones listened in genuine amazement, for Guy had been carrying things with a much higher hand than he had supposed. His debts, according to his own showing, footed up one hundred and twenty-five dollars, and if the amounts charged against him on the books of his creditors exceeded his expectations as greatly as Jones hoped they would, he owed at least two hundred dollars. The commercial traveler took down the names and amounts as Guy called them off—a proceeding that Guy could not see the necessity of.

"You mustn't show that to anybody," said he.

"Certainly not," replied Jones with an injured air. "I wish to ascertain just how much you owe, so that I may know how large a sum of money it will take to put you on your feet again. One hundred and twenty-five dollars," he continued, after he had added up the column of figures. "That is a bad showing, Guy—a very bad showing indeed. It is a large sum to one whose salary amounts to only four hundred dollars a year, but it must be paid. Are you ready to listen to my plans now?"

"I am," said Guy. "I am all ears."

"I do not suppose that you will like them at first," said Mr. Jones, "but if you will take my advice you will consider well before you reject them. I can only say that I am about to describe to you a business to

which, as I happen to know, a great many people resort to enable them to eke out a respectable livelihood."

With this, Mr. Jones took a long pull at his cigar by way of inspiration, settled back on his elbow on the bed, and proceeded with a minute and careful explanation of the business to which he had referred. He had not said many words before Guy's eyes begun to open with surprise, and the longer he listened the more amazed he became. When Mr. Jones drew from his pocket the implements of his trade and exhibited them to Guy, the latter jumped from his chair in high indignation.

"I'll never do it!" said he with emphasis. "I haven't amounted to much during the time I have knocked about the world, but I have never yet been mean enough to play confidence man."

"This is the way you repay the interest I take in you, is it?" demanded Mr. Jones angrily. "I offer you a friend's advice and services, and you abuse me for it."

"You are no friend when you try to get me into danger," said Guy.

"There's no need of getting excited over it," said Mr. Jones, as the shipping clerk begun pacing nervously up and down the room. "I am not trying to get you into danger. I have followed this business for years, and know that there is no trouble in carrying it out successfully; but mark you—there will be trouble if you don't pay your debts, and serious trouble, too. What will Mr. Walker say? He thinks everything of you now—says you're one of the finest young fellows in St. Louis."

"Does he say that?" asked Guy, who could not remember that any one had ever spoken a word in his praise before.

"Yes, he does; and if I were you I would work hard to retain his good opinion."

"I don't see that I can retain it by becoming a swindler," said Guy.

"He will never know it; but he will know there's something wrong when your creditors carry their bills to him, as they certainly will, if you don't settle up soon."

"Great Cæsar!" gasped Guy, who trembled at the bare mention of the merchant's name in connection with his debts. "Is there no other way out? Can't you lend me some money?"

"Not a red, my dear fellow. I manage to spend all I make as soon as it gets into my hands. There is no other way out that I can think of now. As I told you before, I did not expect that you would like the business at first—I know I objected when it was proposed to me—but you will find that it will grow less distasteful the longer you think about it. It is a sure road to ease and fortune, and you had better take time to consider before you refuse to try it. But you are getting downhearted, Guy. Let's go out for a breath of fresh air. It will liven you up a bit."

"No, I don't care to go out," said Guy. "I am in no mood to enjoy anything."

"Then you will excuse me, won't you? I have an engagement at this hour. I will be back at eleven, and in the meantime you had better smoke another cigar, and think the matter over."

"There's no need that I should think it over. I'll never consent to it—never. My creditors will not drive me to such extremities."

"Oh, they won't, eh?" said Mr. Jones to himself as he closed the door and paused a moment on the landing outside. "We'll see about that, my fine lad. I'll have them following you like so many sleuth-hounds before twenty-four hours have passed over your head. You'll find that they won't care what becomes of you so long as they get their money. There *is* another way out of the difficulty, but I don't think it quite safe to propose it to Guy to-night. I will tell him of it to-morrow. By that time he will be cornered so tightly that he will be glad to do anything to get out."

So saying the commercial traveler laughed softly to himself, and slowly descended the stairs.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE STORE.

IN THE hall Mr. Jones met his landlady. The sight of her seemed to recall something to his mind, for he quickly thrust his hand into his pocket, and said as he approached:

"I am ashamed of myself, Mrs. Willis, but I never thought of it before, I assure you."

"Why, what do you mean, Mr. Jones?" asked the lady in surprise.

"I mean that, contrary to my usual custom, I have neglected to pay my week's board."

"Pray don't mention it," said Mrs. Willis, accepting the bill her lodger tendered her. "If I had needed the money I should not have hesitated to ask for it. But, Mr. Jones, I am really afraid that I shall have to speak to your friend, Guy."

The commercial traveler spread out his feet, placed his hands behind his back, and gazed fixedly at the oil-cloth on the floor, but had nothing to say.

"It isn't the money I care for," said the landlady, "but I can see very plainly that Guy is getting into bad habits. He is going to ruin as fast as he can, and I think it is your duty to advise him to do better."

"I do, Mrs. Willis; indeed I do, very frequently," replied Jones, in a sorrowful voice; "but I find that it is of no use. I have no more influence with him than I have with the wind. I am surprised to hear that he owes you," he added, with some indignation in his tones, "but I know the reason for it. It isn't because Guy isn't able, or doesn't want to pay, but simply because he is so careless. If you will take my advice you can get your money to-morrow."

"What must I do?"

"Do as the rest of his creditors do—call upon him at the store. Suppose you come about six o'clock in the evening? You will be sure to find him in then."

"Oh, I can't do that," said Mrs. Willis quickly. "I don't want to dun Mr. Harris."

"Of course not; you merely wish to remind him that he is in your debt, that's all."

"Why couldn't I speak to him here and now?"

"You could, certainly, but it would do no good. He would promise faithfully to pay up at once, and never think of the matter again. He is just so forgetful. I really wish you could make it convenient to call on him to-morrow evening at six o'clock," added Mr. Jones, "for by so doing you will benefit Guy as well as yourself. He will draw his quarter's salary then, and if you can get your money out of him it will keep him from spending it for beer and billiards—a practice to which he has of late, I am sorry to say, become very much addicted."

The argument was a clincher, and put all the good lady's scruples to rout. She did not need the money, and neither did she want to dun Guy; but if by that means she could keep him from spending his hard earnings foolishly, it was her duty to do it. So she promished to follow Mr. Jones' advice, and the latter, after begging her not to say a word to Guy concerning what had just passed between them, leisurely pulled on his gloves and left the house.

"There's one hound I have put on your track, Mr. Harris," muttered the commercial traveler when he had gained the street. "If I could only raise a suspicion in her mind that her money is in danger, wouldn't she make things lively though? For good, fine, ornamental dunning, commend me to a mad landlady, who can do more of it in five minutes than any ten men can do in half an hour. I know, for I have had experience with them."

With this reflection Mr. Jones pulled his coat collar up around his ears, for the evening air was chilly, and hurrying down Fourth Street turned into the door of a

fashionable tailoring establishment. Meeting the proprietor as he entered he exclaimed:

"Now, Mr. Warren, I am quite sure that you were on the point of starting for my boarding-house to dun me for that bill I owe you. I am really ashamed of myself—but here's the——"

"Halloo! what's the matter with you, Jones?" interrupted the tailor. "Your bill is a mere trifle, not more than ten or fifteen dollars, and if I had wanted the money I should not have failed to let you know it But, Jones, I intend to make you a present of that and more, too. You have recommended our house extensively during your travels, and in that way have helped us many a dollar. If you will step into the back part of the store we'll take your measure and put you up a fine business suit."

"You are very kind," said Mr. Jones gratefully. "I accept your offer with thanks. I should like a new business suit, one something like that you made for Harris a few weeks ago. By the way, if it is a fair question, what did he pay you for it?"

"Not one dime," said the merchant with a laugh.

"How? I don't understand you."

"I mean that we have never seen a cent of his money since he began trading with us."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Mr. Jones. "I declare I never saw that fellow's equal for putting off things. Send your bill down to the store to-morrow evening at six o'clock, and give him a first-class overhauling."

"Oh, I guess I won't do that. He may be a little short just at present, and if he is I don't want to press him. We are not in need of money."

"But Guy isn't short; he's got plenty of funds."

"Then perhaps I should make him angry, and that wouldn't pay, for he's a good customer."

"No, you'll not make him mad," said Mr. Jones, "for he has got so in the habit of being dunned that he expects it, and never thinks of paying a bill without it. You'll have to talk right up to him, for he is as full of

excuses as an egg is of meat. He's perfectly honest, but *so* peculiar. You needn't tell him that I suggested this plan of operations to you."

"Of course not," said Mr. Warren.

The conversation ran on in this channel while the tailor was taking Mr. Jones' measure, and the result was that the merchant announced his determination to send his bill to his debtor at the store on the following evening at six o'clock.

When Mr. Jones went out he bent his steps toward a livery stable, where a conversation of a like character with the above took place between him and the proprietor, and with the same result. Then he called at a billiard saloon, dropped into Dutch Jake's for a moment, and wound up his walk by visiting a hat store and one or two furnishing establishments. Having then called upon all of Guy's creditors, he lighted a cigar and strolled slowly homeward, well satisfied with his evening's work. Guy's debts amounted to two hundred and seventy-five dollars.

"He'll never be able to pay them out of the salary he draws now," thought Mr. Jones. "There are only two courses of action open to him, and no matter which one he chooses, he is doomed as surely as his name is Guy Harris. I ought to manage some way to bring this business to old Walker's ears," added Mr. Jones, stopping suddenly and looking down at the sidewalk in a brown study. "I have it. Hyslom is just the man. He is mean enough for anything."

Mr. Jones turned, and hastily retracing his steps to a billiard saloon he had visited a few minutes before, beckoned to a seedy-looking man he found there, who followed him to the farthest corner of the room. A whispered conversation was carried on between them for a few moments, and was brought to a close by Mr. Jones, who slipped a five-dollar bill into the hand of his seedy companion and went out.

His plans against Guy were now all perfected, and making his way homeward with a light heart, he tum-

bled into bed and slept soundly beside his victim, who all the night long tossed uneasily about, never once closing his eyes in slumber.

Mr. Jones and the shipping clerk ate breakfast together the next morning as usual, and set out in company for the store. Neither of them referred to the matters that had been discussed the night before. They were so disagreeable that Guy did not want to talk about them if he could help it, and Mr. Jones was much too cunning to speak of them himself. He knew that the leaven was working, and he wanted to give it plenty of time.

When they reached the block in which the store was located, Mr. Jones begun casting anxious glances about, as if he were looking for some one. Presently he discovered a man, dressed in a shabby genteel suit of black, standing in a door-way on the opposite side of the street. This individual, seeing that Mr. Jones' eyes were fastened upon him, nodded his head, slapped the breast-pocket of his coat, and made other signs which must have been perfectly intelligible to Mr. Jones, for he replied to them by various gestures of approval and delight.

Guy remained at the store but a few minutes—just long enough to receive some instructions from Mr. Walker—and then went out and hurried toward the levee.

As soon as he had disappeared, Mr. Jones walked to the door and flourished his handkerchief once or twice in the air; whereupon the shabby individual in the opposite door-way hurried down the sidewalk to the nearest crossing, came over to Mr. Jones' side of the street, and with an air of bustle and business entered the store and inquired for Mr. Walker.

On being shown into the private office he placed his hat on the floor, and pulling out a memorandum-book, which was filled with papers, folded and indorsed like bills, said:

"You may have heard of me, Mr. Walker. My

name is Hyslom, and my business is collecting bad debts. I am a professional dun, at your service. If it will not conflict with the rules of your establishment, I should like a few minutes' interview with Mr. Harris."

At this the merchant begun to prick up his ears.

"The shipping clerk is absent just now," said he. "May I be allowed to inquire into the nature of your business with him?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the pretended collector. "It is no more than right that you should be made acquainted with the habits of your employes. Mr. Harris, it seems, has been rather fast during the last few months, spending money with a lavish hand, and running in debt to livery stables, billiard saloons, tailoring establishments and beer gardens. I have bills against him to the amount of two hundred dollars and over. I am well aware of the fact that he is perfectly good, for as he is a very wealthy young man and a nephew of yours, I really——"

"Sir," said the merchant, "Mr. Harris is no relation to me."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the collector, starting up in his chair. "Then he is sailing under false colors. He says you are his uncle, and has repeatedly told his creditors to send their bills to you, and they would be promptly settled."

"I know nothing about his debts," said Mr. Walker, greatly astonished. "You must see Mr. Harris himself. Good-day, sir."

The bogus collector returned his memorandum-book to his pocket, picked up his hat, and bowing himself out of the private office, hurried through the store, and down the street, like a man driven to death with business.

Mr. Walker watched him as long as he was in sight, and then arose slowly to his feet.

"I expected better things of Guy than this," said he to himself. "If I have been deceived in him I shall be tempted to distrust everybody. Where did he get the money he has been spending so foolishly? He must have used some belonging to the firm."

So saying, Mr. Walker left his private office to begin a thorough investigation of Guy's accounts.

Business went on as smoothly as usual in the store that day with everybody except Guy. He was kept so busy, both in doors and out, that he had but little time to devote to his troubles; but his work dragged heavily, and every thing he undertook seemed to go wrong end foremost. Six o'clock came at last, and while Guy, wearied in body and mind, was standing at the book-keeper's desk, rendering an account of his day's work, a clerk hurried up with the information that a lady had called to see him on private business.

"A lady—on private business?" repeated Guy. "I am not acquainted with any ladies in St. Louis."

There was one lady, however, with whom he was pretty well acquainted, and that was Mrs. Willis; and she it was who had called to see him.

"Mr. Harris," said she, as if she hardly knew how to make known her errand, "I have come to ask you if you could make it convenient to settle your board bill this evening?"

"No, ma'am, I cannot," said Guy, reddening. "I have no money."

"But you draw your quarter's salary to-day, do you not?"

"No, ma'am. I haven't a cent due me from the firm. I know this ought to have been paid long ago, Mrs. Willis, and I am sorry indeed that I have kept you waiting. I will hand you the very first dollar I get."

It was plain that the landlady's heart was not in the business. She had undertaken it merely from a sense of duty, and having, as she believed, fulfilled that duty, she was ready to drop the board bill and talk about something else.

After a few commonplace remarks about the weather, and the lively appearance of the streets, she bowed pleasantly to Guy and went out.

The clerk, feeling like a criminal, walked slowly back to the book-keeper's desk, but scarcely had he

reached it when he was informed that there was another visitor waiting to see him in the front part of the store.

This time it proved to be a gentleman—one of the clerks in the employ of the tailor he patronized so extensively. He shook Guy cordially by the hand, asked him how business was prospering, and produced a bill from his pocket-book.

"That's the way you stand on our books," said he, "and I thought I would drop in and see how you were fixed," a slang expression for "see if you had any money."

The clerk beat a tattoo with his fingers on the counter, whistled "Dixie," and run his eyes about the store as if he were taking a mental inventory of the stock. He had been told by his employer that he might find it necessary to give Guy a good talking to, and he was screwing up his courage.

"Eighty-seven dollars!" exclaimed Guy, as he run his eye over the bill. "Impossible! The last time I spoke to Mr. Warren about my account he told me it was only fifty dollars."

"But that suit of clothes you have on your back now came from our house since then," said the clerk.

"That's so," returned Guy. "I forgot that. But it beats me how these bills do run up."

"Yes; one can't get dry goods for nothing in these times. Are you going to ante?"

"Not now. I can't."

"Oh, that's played out. Come down!" said the clerk, extending his hand toward Guy and rapping his knuckles on the counter. "Short settlements make long friends. Pay me now."

"But I tell you I can't. I haven't a cent of money."

"Now, Harris," said the clerk, raising his voice, "permit me to say that this thing is getting monotonous. If you don't pay, and that too in short order, we'll snatch you bald-headed."

"Don't talk so loud," whispered Guy, in great excitement. "I'll pay you as soon as I can. Tell Mr. Warren that I'll call and see him about this bill."

"All right. If you know which side of your bread is buttered you won't waste time in doing it. The old man talks of sending your bill to Mr. Walker."

The clerk departed, and his place was almost immediately filled by Dutch Jake, who entered with an air which said very plainly that he wasn't going to stand any nonsense. Guy's heart sunk within him.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE PARTNERSHIP.

"SEE GATES, Meester Harris?" said Dutch Jake, in a voice so loud that Guy trembled in apprehension. "How ish dis pisness? You got mine monish—mine eight tollars und vorty zents?"

"No," said Guy, "I haven't got it."

Jake's whole appearance changed in a second; his red face grew redder than ever; he squared himself in front of the counter, planted his feet firmly on the floor, and doubling up his huge fist, begun flourishing it in the air above his head in readiness to emphasize the words he was about to utter.

Guy saw that there was a crisis at hand, Jake was fairly boiling over with fury, and unless he was appeased on the instant, something dreadful would happen. Guy thought rapidly, and spoke just in time.

"Hold on!" said he, "and hear me out. I haven't got the money now, but I'll get it as soon as the book-keeper is through with the cash account, and on my way home I'll drop in and hand it to you."

These words produced another magical change in the angry German. The fierce frown vanished and a genial smile overspread his face. The sledge-hammer fist was opened and extended in a friendly manner across the counter toward Guy.

"Dot's all right, Meester Harris," said he. "Dot's *all* right. Ven you comes around ve has a glass of peer at mine exbenses, ain't it? Oh, yah!"

Jake departed, and then came the hatter, the livery stable keeper, the jeweler, the man who had furnished the young spendthrift with the fine shirts and neck-ties he wore, and lastly, the proprietor of the billiard saloon

—all of whom presented bills which greatly exceeded Guy's calculations. They all appeared to be satisfied with their debtor's promise to pay up at once. But some of them left him with the assurance that if money were not speedily forthcoming, they would place their accounts before Mr. Walker.

Guy was utterly confounded. He could not imagine what had caused all his creditors to become so pressing in their demands. Like one in a dream he went through his business with the book-keeper, and when it was completed, hurried away to find his friend and counselor, Mr. Jones.

In the back part of the store was a small apartment which was used as a wash-room, and to which light was admitted through a single pane of glass set in the door. In this room Guy found Mr. Jones, busy performing his ablutions. He had retreated there immediately on the entrance of Mrs. Willis, and through the pane of glass before mentioned had watched all that went on in the store. He could not hear what was said, but he knew by the impatient gestures of some of the creditors and the despairing expression that frequently overspread Guy's face, that some bitter things had been said and some alarming threats made.

"Great Scott!" whispered Guy as he entered and closed the door behind him. "What does this mean, Jones? The whole city of St. Louis has been here with bills against me."

"It means, dear fellow, that these people want their rights," returned the commercial traveler in a tone of voice which led Guy to believe that his friend deeply sympathized with him in his troubles.

"But do they imagine that I am made of money—that I can raise almost nine months' wages at a moment's warning?" cried Guy, whose distress was painful to behold. "I owe two hundred and seventy-five dollars. Jones, I am ruined!"

"It certainly looks that way," was the thought that passed through the mind of the commercial traveler, but he looked down at the floor and said nothing.

"If you have the least friendship for me suggest something," continued Guy in a trembling voice—"something—*anything*—no matter what it is if it will only put two hundred and seventy-five dollars in my pocket. I must have it, for these men have almost all threatened to call upon Mr. Walker if I don't settle up at once. If he should hear how I have been going on he would discharge me."

"Yes, I believe he would," answered Mr. Jones, twirling his mustache and gazing through the window into the store. "It would doubtless make him angry, for merchants, you know, are very particular in regard to the habits of their clerks. It is a hard case, Guy—a desperate case; and I confess that it is one I cannot manage, although I am fruitful in expedients. I have thought the matter over since I have been in here, but have hit upon no honest plan to get you out of your difficulties. It is true," added Mr. Jones, speaking as if he were communing with himself, "you handle considerable of the firm's money, and might borrow two or three hundred of it just to shut up the mouths of these impatient creditors."

"Oh, no," exclaimed Guy quickly; "I can't do that."

"I didn't suppose you would," continued the commercial traveler, in his oily tones, "but it is an expedient often resorted to by business men to help them out of desperate straits like yours, and I can't see that there would be any danger in it in your case. A good many of our customers are settling their business preparatory to going to war. Suppose that one of them pays you four or five hundred dollars, goes into the army and gets killed, and you use the money! Who would be the wiser for it? Of course you would not be dishonest enough to steal the money—you would only borrow it until such time as you could replace it out of your salary; and if you felt any conscientious scruples about it, you might pay interest for the use of it."

"But how could I account for the money being in my possession when I got ready to pay it over?" asked Guy.

"Easily enough. You could say to Mr. Walker some morning: 'I received a letter from Mr. So-and-So last night. He went into the service six months ago, you know, without settling with us. Here's the amount of his bill with interest to date.' That's all fair and square, isn't it?"

"But Mr. Walker or the book-keeper would want to acknowledge the receipt of the money," said Guy.

"Of course they would. You could give them some fictitious address, and as you have all the letters to mail, you could easily see that that particular letter did not go into the office."

"But you said something about the man being killed. Suppose that happens before I have had time to save enough out of my salary to replace the money I have borrowed. Then what? He can't pay his debt after he is dead."

"Of course not; and in that case you'll be smart enough to say nothing to nobody about it. Just keep mum. The amount of his bill will go on the debtor side of the profit and loss account, but you'll be just that much ahead."

As Mr. Jones said this he looked sharply at Guy, and told himself that his specious arguments were beginning to have their effect. The shipping clerk was gazing steadily at the floor, and there was an expression on his face that had never been seen there before.

"I am afraid I couldn't carry out that plan successfully," said Guy, after a few moments' reflection. "It is somewhat complicated, and my knowledge of business is so limited that I might make a mistake somewhere. I would much rather go into partnership with you, as you suggested last night."

Mr. Jones hastily seized the towel and buried his face in it to conceal his exultation. He had Guy under his thumb at last.

"I think myself that it would be the safer plan," said he, as soon as he had controlled himself so that he could speak with his usual steadiness of voice, "and it is the surest way, too."

"It is a way I don't like," said Guy. "It is swindling."

"But it brings in the money by the handful, and money is what makes the mare go in these times," returned Mr. Jones. "We'll go home and talk it over."

"You must be very particular in your explanations," said Guy. "It is a new business to me, you know, and I might spoil the whole thing."

"Never fear. It is easily learned, and I will go over it so often that you can remember everything I say and do. This is your last chance, you know, for I leave the city on the eleven o'clock train to-night, to be gone at least three weeks."

The commercial traveler had already been more than a quarter of an hour in making his toilet, and had got no further than the washing of his hands and face; but now he begun to bestir himself. The most complicated part of it all—the brushing of his perfumed locks and the adjusting of his hat and neck-tie before the glass—occupied just one minute, about one-tenth of the time Mr. Jones usually devoted to it. Then he was ready to give Guy his first lesson in playing the part of confidence man.

In order that they might be free from all interruption, they went directly home and locked themselves in their room, where they remained in close consultation, coming out when the supper-bell rung, and returning immediately after disposing of a very light meal. By that time Guy had thoroughly mastered the part he was to perform, and all that remained to be done was to hunt up somebody with plenty of money, and try the effect of their scheme upon him. As soon as it begun to grow dark they left the house, and sauntered away, arm-in-arm, as if they had determined upon nothing in particular. Arriving at Fourth Street, they stationed themselves in a dark door-way, and Mr. Jones, settling into an easy position, closely scrutinized every man who passed, finally singling out one as an object worthy of their attention.

There was nothing particularly noticeable about this man, either in his clothing or manners, for he was as well dressed as the majority of the pedestrians who were constantly passing along the street, and there was none of that "country air" about him which seems to be inseparable from so many who live in the rural districts. From what Guy had learned of the nature of the business in hand, he inferred that their act could be practiced with safety and success only on green countrymen, and this individual seemed to him to be a most unpromising object to operate upon. But Mr. Jones thought differently.

"He's the fellow we're looking for," said he, in a whisper. "The only question is whether or not he is well fixed; but that is something we've got to find out. Follow him up and speak to him at the first opportunity. If he doesn't give you a chance make one for yourself. Be careful now."

With a beating heart Guy stepped down from the door-way and set out in pursuit of the gentleman; and before he had gone a block an opportunity to accost him presented itself. When the gentleman reached a crossing he stopped and looked up at the building, searching no doubt for the names of the streets. Guy came up behind him and also stopped and looked about with a bewildered air, as if he did not know which way to turn.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said he; "will you be kind enough to tell me which way to go to find Robinson's hardware store?"

"I should be glad to tell you if I knew, but I am a stranger here," was the reply.

"Are you, indeed?" said Guy. "So am I; and the worst of it is, I fear I am lost."

"I am in the same situation," said the stranger. "I am trying to find my hotel, and if I don't succeed very soon I shall call a carriage."

"Why, so you can. I never thought of that."

"Where are you from?" asked the stranger.

"Brattleboro, Vermont," replied Guy, "and I never before was so far away from home. I have one friend here, a brother-in-law, if I could only find him, who owns an extensive hardware store. Where do you live, sir?"

"A few miles from Ann Arbor, Michigan, and this is my first visit to St. Louis. I am stopping at the Olive Street Hotel."

"So am I; but, to tell the truth, I haven't funds enough to pay for such expensive lodgings, and that's another reason why I am so anxious to find Robinson. My father wouldn't give me much money for fear I should fall into the hands of—sharpers, I believe he called them."

"Yes, that's what they are," said the stranger with an air of superior wisdom. "Your father is a sensible man. It isn't just the thing to trust an innocent young fellow like you alone in a great city with plenty of money in his pocket. He is almost sure to lose it."

"Are you not afraid?" asked Guy.

"Me? No. I've traveled."

"Then you will let me stay with you, won't you? I shall feel safe in your company."

"Certainly, I will."

"Well, suppose we go and see if we can find our hotel. I'd rather walk than call a carriage. Your name is——"

"Whitney," replied the stranger. "And yours?"

"Benjamin—Rufus Benjamin, at your service," said Guy.

The embryo confidence man had the satisfaction of seeing that he was making rapid headway, and when Whitney moved away with him he took his arm, and the two walked along conversing as familiarly as though they had been acquainted for years.

Guy seemed so innocent and confiding and made himself appear so ignorant of city life, that Whitney wondered how his father came to trust him so far away from home, and repeatedly assured him that it was a fortunate thing for him that they met just as they did,

for had Guy been left to find his way back to his hotel alone, he would have been almost certain to get himself into trouble of some kind.

Finally, as they were passing a beer-garden their attention was attracted by the strains of music, and Whitney proposed that, as it was yet early in the evening, they should step in and see what was going on. Guy agreed, and when they had seated themselves at a table in a remote corner of the garden, he called for cider. He never drank anything stronger, he said, for his father didn't allow it. But the German had no cider, and Guy, after a great deal of persuasion, was as last prevailed upon to indulge in a glass of soda-water, while Whitney solaced himself with a mug of beer. For nearly half an hour they sat at the table conversing upon different topics, smoking their cigars and sipping at their glasses, and then the door opened and Mr. Jones came in.

"There's the very man I have been looking for," said Guy joyfully. "How very fortunate! Robinson, come here."

Mr. Jones approached the table at which his partner was sitting, and after looking at him for a moment as if trying to recollect where he had seen him before, suddenly seized him by both hands, and began pulling him about over the floor as if he were overjoyed to meet him.

"Why, Rufus Benjamin, is this you?" he exclaimed. "You don't know how glad I am to see you."

"And neither do you know how glad I am to see you," returned Guy. "I have been looking for you all the afternoon. Mr. Robinson, permit me to introduce my friend, Mr. Whitney, from Ann Arbor, Michigan."

"Happy to meet you, Mr. Whitney," said Jones, extending his hand. "I am always glad to make the acquaintance of any of Benjamin's friends."

"I never met him before this evening," said Whitney, "but I think I have acted the part of a friend in taking him under my charge. When I first saw him he was as pale as a sheet, and trembling as if he had the ague."

"Well, I was lost," said Guy, who wondered what Whitney would think if he knew the real cause of his nervousness and excitement. "I have never been alone in a big city like this, you know."

"I don't suppose the boy has been outside of the State of Vermont half a dozen times in his life," said Jones. "How are things prospering in that out-of-the-way part of the world anyhow, Rufus?"

"We've had a very good season in our parts, and the crops have done well," replied Guy. "But, Robinson, why didn't you meet me at the depot?"

"Why did you not write and tell me when to expect you?" asked Jones.

"I did."

"Well, I have not received the letter. I have just returned from Washington, and no doubt I shall find it waiting for me at home. Where are you stopping, gentlemen?" At the Olive Street House, eh? You must permit me to take charge of you now, and to say that you shall not stop at a hotel any longer. I will call a carriage presently and take you home with me. I know that Mollie will be glad to have you come, Rufus—she's my wife, you know, Mr. Whitney, Benjamin's sister—for it is fully two years since she has seen you."

The conversation thus commenced continued for a quarter of an hour. Mr. Jones was in no hurry to begin his business operations, for Guy was playing a part that was entirely new to him, and he was afraid to trust him. In a few minutes, however, he had learned a good deal of Whitney's history and habits, and having satisfied himself that he was a good subject to operate upon, he gave Guy the signal, and the latter prepared for action.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE PARTNERS IN ACTION.

OBINSON," said Guy, after a preliminary cough and a desperate attempt to subdue his increasing excitement, "I understood you a while ago to say that you have just returned from Washington. You went there on some business connected with politics, I suppose?"

"Oh, no," replied Mr. Jones. "I don't trouble my head about politics. I have always made my living honestly, and I always intend to do so. I went there to take out a patent on a recent invention of mine."

"What is it?" inquired Mr. Whitney, with some eagerness. "I am interested in every new invention, for I do a little business in that line myself sometimes. I own the rights for several washing-machines, pumps, and scissor-sharpeners in our county."

"And this is just what you need to complete your list," said Mr. Jones. "It is a fine thing, and is bound to make somebody independently rich one of these days. You know, Rufus, that about a year ago I wrote you that my store had been entered by burglars, who broke open my safe and robbed it of six thousand dollars."

"I recollect the circumstance," said Guy.

"Well," continued Mr. Jones, "that convinced me that business men ought to take more precautions to guard their property from the assaults of outlaws, so I set my wits at work, and I finally succeeded in perfecting a burglar-proof lock—an arrangement which is at once simple and convenient, but which can neither be cut with a cold-chisel, blown open with gunpowder, or even unlocked by any one who does not understand its construction. I gave away a good many models while I was in Washington, but I think I have one or two left."

So saying, Mr. Jones begun to overhaul his pockets, and finally produced a small brass padlock, similar in size and shape to those sometimes used on dog-collars.

"Ah! yes, here is one," said he, "and I defy any man in the world to open it without breaking it. This model, you will, of course, understand, Mr. Whitney, is intended merely to illustrate the principles of the invention. The locks, when ready for use, will be made of the best of steel and be large and heavy. I have one attached to the safe at my store, and to-morrow you will have an opportunity to see how it looks and operates. I will give it to you on easy terms, and will warrant—by the way, there's my partner, Mr. Benton. I want to see him on particular business, so I beg that you will excuse me. I will return in one moment."

As Mr. Jones said this he jumped to his feet, and disappeared through the door, evidently in pursuit of a gentleman who had just gone out. He left his invention on the table, and Whitney picked it up and examined it. The key was tied to it by a piece of ribbon, and this Whitney inserted in the lock, when, behold! it opened like any other common padlock. He was astonished at his success. He closed the lock again, and opened it with all ease. Then he handed it to Guy, and he did the same, and appeared to be as much surprised thereat as was Mr. Whitney.

At this moment Mr. Jones came back.

"Well, gentlemen," said he, hurrying to the table and picking up the lock. "I have just made an appointment with my partner, and it is necessary that I should run down to the store for a few minutes. Will you accompany me?"

"No," replied Guy; "we'll stay here. I am too tired to run around any more to-night."

"Very well," said Mr. Jones, without giving Whitney time to say whether he would go or not. "I'll return in a quarter of an hour with a carriage, and then we'll go round to the hotel after your luggage. In the meantime, enjoy yourselves to the best of your ability. I

will leave my invention with you, and you can examine it at your leisure."

"We have already inspected it to our satisfaction," replied Whitney with a smile. "I couldn't make a fortune by selling an arrangement like that. We opened it very easily."

"You did!" exclaimed Mr. Jones.

"Certainly," said Guy. "If I were a burglar, and wanted to get into your safe, that lock would not keep me out."

Mr. Jones looked from one to the other of his companions, and then dropped into a chair, apparently overwhelmed with amazement.

"Is it possible that I have made a failure after all?" said he. "If the secret mechanism of the invention can be so easily discovered, how does it come that the officials in Washington did not see through it at once? Gentlemen, you are either dreaming or joking."

"No, we are awake and in sober earnest," said Guy. "We certainly did open that lock, and to convince you of the fact, we'll do it again. Hand it out here."

Again Mr. Jones was silent.

"I may have made a mistake," said he, after gazing thoughtfully at the floor for a few moments, "but I can hardly believe it."

"Give me the lock," repeated Guy, "and I will bet you any sum you please that I will open it at the first trial."

"Oh, I never bet," said Jones, quickly rising to his feet and buttoning up his coat. "I regard the taking of money gained in that way as but little better than highway robbery."

"You can't have much faith in your invention," said Whitney.

"Yes, I have unbounded faith in it."

"I left the most of my money at the hotel in charge of the clerk, but here's a small amount which says that I did open that lock, and that I can do it again," said Guy, drawing from his pocket a twenty-dollar bill,

which his friend and partner had furnished him for this very purpose.

Jones drummed with his foot on the floor, puffed out his cheeks, and scratched his head like a man in deep perplexity. He looked first at Whitney, then at Guy, then down at the money that had been placed on the table, and finally dropped into his chair again.

"I believe I'll take a hand in this," said Whitney. "I don't often do things of this kind, in fact never, unless I see a chance to make something, but I'll stake twenty-five dollars on it just for luck."

Mr. Jones again arose to his feet and nervously rubbed his chin as if he were completely bewildered by this turn of events, all the while watching the movements of Whitney, who produced his pocket-book and counted out the sum he had named.

"Gentlemen," said the commercial traveler, "when I see persons willing to wager such large sums of money as those you have laid upon the table, I always know they are betting on a sure thing."

This remark had just the effect that Mr. Jones intended it should have. It led Whitney to believe that in spite of all he had said, the patentee had suddenly lost faith in his invention.

After a moment's hesitation he brought out his pocket-book again and counted down twenty-five dollars more, which he also placed upon the table.

"Now, Robinson, what are you going to do about it?" asked Guy.

"Why, when I am among gentlemen I do as gentlemen do, of course," replied Mr. Jones. "But to tell the truth, the confident manner in which you act and speak convinces me that I have made a grand mistake."

Having said this Mr. Jones paused in the hope that Whitney would take courage and go down into his pocket-book after more money. And in fact this little piece of strategy came very near being successful, for Whitney put his hand into his pocket, but after thinking a moment he pulled it out empty.

"I *know* I have made a mistake," said Mr. Jones.

Here another long pause was made, but as Whitney showed no disposition to increase his wager, Mr. Jones continued:

"But it is too late to remedy the matter now, and the invention must stand or fall according to its merits."

Mr. Jones counted out seventy dollars with which he covered Guy's bet and Whitney's, after which the money was raked into a pile and placed under a hat, to hide it from the view of the other people in the garden. Mr. Jones then put his hand into his pocket and produced his patent lock—not the one he had exhibited before, but another that was not to be opened. In shape and size it was so exactly like the first that had they been seen together no difference could have been detected between them.

"Now," he said, "if I have made a failure, I am willing to give seventy dollars to be convinced of the fact." And as he pushed the lock across the table toward Whitney, his hand trembled so naturally that the dupe really believed that this accomplished sharper had made the first bet of his life, and that it had excited him.

Whitney took the lock with a confident smile and inserted the key into it, expecting of course to open it as he had opened the other; but his smile suddenly gave way to a look of astonishment and alarm, and his face lengthened out wonderfully when he found that the key would not turn. He tried it over and over again, shook the lock, and even pounded it on the table, but it was all in vain. Then he handed it to Guy, and he met with no better success.

"What do you suppose can be the matter with it?" asked the latter, after he had made several attempts to open the lock.

"I'm sure I don't know," replied Whitney. "Let me try again."

"We opened it without the least trouble before," continued Guy.

"Oh, you are certainly mistaken, Rufus," said Mr. Jones blandly.

"No, he isn't!" exclaimed the dupe. "I am not blind, and I know that we both opened this lock not ten minutes since. But we can't do it now," he added, handing the invention back to its owner, who put it back into his pocket and took charge of the money.

"This is the first I ever made by betting," said he. "Now I must be off to fulfill my engagement with my partner. I'll return very shortly, and then we will go home."

So saying Mr. Jones disappeared, leaving Guy and Whitney to talk the matter over at their leisure.

"What an idiot I was to risk my money on that thing," said the latter regretfully. "I ought to have known that a man who has spent a whole year in perfecting an invention is better acquainted with it than a stranger. I am nearly strapped. I haven't money enough to pay my fare to Chicago, and I don't know a soul this side of there."

"Don't let it trouble you," said Guy soothingly. "Robinson will return that money in the morning, and then he will read us a long lecture on betting."

"Do you really think he will give it back?" asked Whitney, in a more hopeful tone.

"I am sure of it. He does not intend to keep it, for he was brought up in New England, and according to his idea, betting is no better than gambling. Some more cigars, waiter. I've got a quarter left."

The cigars were brought, and Guy, receiving the matches from the hand of the waiter, deposited them in a little pool of beer upon the table, so that when he wanted to light their cigars the matches would not burn. Guy grumbled at this, and said he would go to the bar for a light. He went; and Whitney, who was deeply occupied with his own thoughts, bemoaning his folly for risking his money on that patent invention, and wondering if Robinson would be generous enough to return it in the morning, did not see him when, after

lighting his cigar, he slipped through the door into the street.

Guy's first attempt at swindling had met with success, but it did not bring with it those feelings of happiness and independence which he had so confidently looked for. There was not a criminal in St. Louis who felt so utterly disgraced as he did at that moment. The reaction had come after his hour of excitement, and his spirits were sadly depressed. He looked upon it now as a most contemptible proceeding to wheedle one's way into a stranger's good graces, and then seize the first opportunity to do him an injury. Accompanying this reflection was the thought—and his mind would dwell upon it, in spite of all he could do to prevent it—that he had rendered himself liable to legal punishment, and that he was every moment in danger of being arrested and thrust into jail. Had Whitney's money been in his pocket just then, he would have lost not a moment in returning it to its rightful owner; but it was safely stowed away about the good clothes of his friend and partner, Mr. Jones, who was seated in a certain bowling alley, which had been designated beforehand as the place of meeting, solacing himself with a cigar, and anxiously awaiting Guy's appearance.

When the latter came in, Mr. Jones beckoned with his finger, and Guy followed him to the furthest corner of the saloon.

"Well," said the commercial traveler, "how do you like it as far as you have gone? Twenty-five dollars for an hour's work I call pretty fair wages. If you make that amount every night, it will not take you long to pay your debts."

"I don't like the business at all," said Guy, "and I will never attempt it again."

Mr. Jones settled back in his chair, looked up at the ceiling through the clouds of smoke that arose from the cigar, and said to himself:

"I don't know that it makes any difference to me whether you do or not. If you don't pay your debts in

this way, you must use some of the firm's money. When you do that your days as shipping clerk are numbered, and my brother will step into the position."

Then aloud he asked:

"How did you get away from him?"

"I did just as you told me," replied Guy, rather impatiently, for it was a matter that he did not like to talk about. "I dampened the matches, went to the bar for a light, and stepped out when he wasn't looking."

"He didn't bleed as freely as I hoped he would," continued Mr. Jones; "but, after all, we did very well. Here's your share of the spoils—twenty-five dollars."

It was on the point of Guy's tongue to refuse to accept it; but he thought of Dutch Jake, who was probably at that very moment stamping about his little groggery like a madman, because his eight dollars and forty cents had not been paid according to promise, and knowing that the man must at all hazards be prevented from making another visit to the store, he took the money and put it into his pocket.

"Now I must run down and say good-by to my brother," said Mr. Jones, "and by that time the 'bus will be along to take me across the river. "When I return I hope to find you on your feet, and with money in your pocket. Take care of yourself."

Mr. Jones hurried out, and in a few moments more was standing in the presence of his brother, and recounting in glowing language the success of his plans.

Will was in ecstasies.

"I will put the finishing touch to them," said he. "I will find Whitney, tell him that he has been swindled, and put him up to have Guy arrested."

"That would be a cunning trick, wouldn't it?" said Mr. Jones.

"Why, it will bring the matter to the notice of Mr. Walker," said Will, "and that's just what I want."

"Well, it is just what I *don't* want," said Mr. Jones. "If Guy is arrested, I lose my situation, for of course he will blow on me. You let him alone. I've given him

plenty of rope, and if he doesn't succeed in hanging himself by the time I get back, I can easily do it for him."

The commercial traveler hurried out to catch the omnibus, and Will tumbled into bed to dream of Guy's disgrace, and his immediate accession to the office of shipping clerk.

CHAPTER XXX.

WORDS FITLY SPOKEN.

GUY LEFT the bowling alley shortly after Mr. Jones went out, and avoiding all the principal thoroughfares, and taking all the back streets in his way, finally reached Dutch Jake's saloon. He had ample time to think over his situation, and was fast giving way to that feeling of desperation which all criminals are said to experience. He was ruined beyond all hope of redemption, he told himself, and he might as well go on. He *must* go on, for it was too late to turn back.

Guy remained at Dutch Jake's saloon three hours, apparently the gayest of the gay, and driven by this spirit of recklessness and desperation that had taken possession of him to commit excesses that astonished everybody present. About one o'clock he got into an altercation with somebody, which threatened for a time to end in a free fight, but Dutch Jake promptly put a stop to the trouble by dragging Guy out of the saloon by the collar, throwing him headlong upon the pavement, and then slamming and locking the door to prevent his return.

The boy's pockets were empty. The last cent of his ill-gotten gains had found its way into Jake's money-drawer, and all Guy had got for it in return was more alcohol than he could carry and an appellation which, in his maudlin condition, tickled his fancy wonderfully. Some one had called him "the prince of good fellows," and during the last hour his fuddled companions had dropped his name and addressed him entirely as "Prince."

"But if I'm a prince," stammered Guy, holding fast to a lamp-post and looking in an uncertain sort of way

toward the door that had just been closed behind him, "wha's ye use lockin' m' out? Do zey want to (hic) 'sult me? Zey'd bet-better mind zer eyes!"

That is the way with saloon-keepers, Guy. It is a part of their business. They have no respect or friendship for you—it is your money they want, and when they have emptied your pockets of the last cent, and the accursed stuff they have sold to you mounts to your brain and steals away your wits, and the Evil One has taken full possession of you, they thrust you into the street, leaving you to shift for yourself.

The next few hours were an utter blank to Guy. He did not know how he got home, but that he got there in some way was evident, for when he came to himself (about daylight) he was lying across the foot of his bed with all his clothes on, and the door of his room was standing wide open.

The instant his eyes were unclosed the events of the night came back to him, accompanied by a splitting headache and a feeling of nervousness and prostration that was almost unbearable.

With scarcely energy enough to move, he staggered to his feet and closed the door; as he did so he caught a glimpse of his face in the mirror. He could scarcely recognize himself. Was that pale, haggard countenance, set off with blood-shot eyes and a black and blue spot on his left cheek, which he had received by coming in contact with some lamp-post on his way home—was that face the face of Guy Harris? Without the beauty spot he looked for all the world as Flint looked on the morning he came creeping out of the forecastle of the Santa Maria, after sleeping off the effects of the drug that had been administered to him.

Sick at heart and so dizzy that he could not stand without holding fast to something, Guy turned and was about to throw himself upon the bed again, when he heard a light step in the hall and a tap at his door.

"Mr. Harris," said the landlady's gentle voice, "it is almost eight o'clock."

"Great Scott!" thought Guy, "and I ought to be at the store this very moment. I don't see how I can stand it to work all day, feeling as I do. I'll have to fill up on beer again before my hand will be steady enough to hold a pen. Yes, ma'am," he added aloud. "I will be down immediately. I declare my voice has changed, too. I'm not myself at all. I feel as if I were going to drop all to pieces."

The announcement that it was time for him to be at work infused some life into Guy. By the aid of a clean shirt and collar and copious ablutions he made a little improvement in his appearance, but the general feeling of worthlessness and the overwhelming sense of shame that pressed upon him, could not be touched by cold water and clean linen. The thought that he must spend the next ten hours in contact with his fellow-men was terrible. He did not want to see anybody. He opened the door very carefully, and went down the stairs with noiseless footsteps, intending to leave the house before his landlady should see him; but she was on the watch. She met him in the hall, and there was something in her eye which told Guy that she knew at least a part of the incidents that had happened the night before.

"Good morning, Mr. Harris," said she, with her usual pleasant and motherly smile, "I have kept your breakfast warm for you."

"Thank you, Mrs. Willis," said Guy, in a very unsteady voice, "but I cannot stop to eat anything; I am late now. Besides, I am not hungry."

"No matter; you can't work all day without taking something nourishing," returned the landlady, and as she spoke she took Guy's arm, and paying no heed to his remonstrances led him into the cozy little dining-room, and seated him at the table.

A tempting breakfast, consisting of his favorite dishes and a cup of coffee, such as Mrs. Willis only could make, was placed before him, but Guy could not eat. He wished he could sink through the floor out of

the lady's sight. He wished she would go away and leave him to the companionship of his gloomy thoughts; but she had no intention of doing anything of the kind. She closed all the doors, and then came and stood by the boy's side with her hand resting on the back of his chair.

"Guy," said she sorrowfully, "what made you do it?"

The clerk stirred his coffee, but could make no reply.

"I know you will forgive me for speaking about this," said Mrs. Willis, laying her soft, cool hand on Guy's feverish forehead. "I do it because I feel a mother's interest in you. I have a son somewhere in the wide world, and if he should fall into such ruinous habits as these, I should feel very grateful if some kind soul would whisper a word of warning in his ear. Stop and think of it, Guy! Stop now, while you can. What would your dear mother say?"

As Mrs. Willis uttered these words—the first really kind, affectionate words that had fallen upon his ear from the lips of a woman for long, long years—Guy's heart softened, a great lump came up in his throat, and tears started to his eyes. Mrs. Willis was in a fair way to accomplish something until she spoke his mother. Then Guy thought of his father's wife, and the old feeling of desperation came back to him.

"I have no mother," said he. "She is dead."

"Then think of your father," urged Mrs. Willis. "What would he say? Surely he loves you, and you ought to respect his feelings."

"Well, if he loves me he has never shown it," retorted Guy bitterly. "I don't care what he thinks. He never respected my wishes or feelings while I was at home, and I don't see why I should respect his now."

"Oh, Guy, don't talk so. There must be some one whose good opinion you value—some one you love. Who is it?"

Guy was silent. He could not recollect that during the time he had been absent from home he had thought of more than one of his relations with any degree of affection.

"Heaven help you, Guy," said Mrs. Willis fervently; and she kissed him and glided out of the room.—Page 279. *Guy Harris.*

"I don't know of anybody," said he at length, "except my Aunt Lucy—and you."

"Then for your aunt's sake—for my sake, Guy, promise me that this shall never happen again. Promise me faithfully that, as long as you live, you will never touch a drop of anything intoxicating, and that you will never again go inside a billiard saloon or a card-room. Promise me."

Again Guy was silent, not because he was unwilling to answer, but because he could not. His heart was too full. Mrs. Willis was satisfied that if the promise was once made, it would be religiously kept. She had read Guy as easily as she could read a printed page, and was well enough acquainted with him to know that when he once fully made up his mind to a thing, he was like Hosea Biglow's meeting-house—too "sot" to be easily moved. So she was resolved to have the promise, and she took a woman's way to exert it. She put her arms around Guy's neck, and drew his face up so that she could look into it. When she saw that his eyes were filled with tears, she knew that she had conquered.

"Promise me," she repeated.

"I promise," said Guy in a husky voice.

"Heaven help you," said Mrs. Willis fervently; and as she said it she kissed him and glided out of the room.

"Great Cæsar!" exclaimed Guy as soon as she had disappeared.

He jumped to his feet, overturning his chair as he did so, ascended the stairs four steps at a time, entered his room and slammed the door behind him. He was not accustomed to such treatment as this, and he hardly knew what to make of it. It was some minutes before he had collected himself so that he could think calmly.

"I looked for nothing but a good scolding and an invitation to make myself scarce about this house," said Guy to himself; "and if Mrs. Willis had treated me in that way she would have served me just right. But she has given me a chance for my life. If she will only

stand by me I will come out all right yet, for I'll keep that promise no matter what happens. She doesn't know about my swindling operations, but Mr. Walker must know of them. I am going to rub this thing all out and begin over again; and, in order to do it as it ought to be done, I must tell him everything. If it brings me my walking papers I shall have nobody to thank but myself."

Guy put on his hat and went down the stairs and out of the house, walking with a firm step and his countenance wearing a determined expression. He scarcely looked to the right or left while he was passing along the street, and when he arrived at the store he went straight to the private office, where Mr. Walker sat busy with his correspondence.

"May I have a few minutes' private conversation with you, sir?" he asked.

"Certainly, Guy," replied the merchant, looking up with some surprise. "Lock the door and sit down."

Guy did as he was directed, and then, without any preliminary words by way of apology or excuse for his conduct, begun and told the story of his mistakes from beginning to end. He kept back nothing except the name of the confederate who had assisted him in fleecing Mr. Whitney, and that he revealed only when it was demanded. Mr. Walker was greatly astonished. When Guy finished his story he sat for some moments in silence.

"I wish the boy had a pleasant home to go to," thought the merchant. "That's the place he ought to be, and there's where he would be safe. But I am sorry to say he hasn't got it. If he goes back to Norwall his father's unreasonable strictness and partiality, and his mother's indifference will drive him straight to ruin. He ought to have kind words now, for he has had more than his share of harsh ones."

"Don't hesitate to speak out, Mr. Walker," said Guy, who believed that the merchant was thinking how he could best communicate to him the fact that his

services were no longer needed. "If I am to be discharged, please say so."

Mr. Walker understood and fully appreciated the situation. Guy was thoroughly penitent—there could be no question about that; but there was an ominous glitter in his eye and a determined set to his tightly closed lips which the merchant did not fail to notice, and which told him as plainly as words that if there ever was a moment in one's life when his future was to be decided for good or ill, that moment in Guy's life had arrived. The right word just then would have buried his resolutions of amendment beyond all hope of resurrection, and sent him down hill with lightning speed. Mr. Walker was not an instant in deciding on his course.

"My dear boy," said he, rising and taking Guy's hand in his own with a cordial grasp, "I have no intention of saying anything of the kind. Why should I discharge you when I have all faith in you? You are a capable, painstaking clerk, and until yesterday I never knew there was anything in your conduct with which anybody could find fault. It has been a bitter lesson, Guy, you know. Will you profit by it?"

"Indeed I shall, sir," replied the boy with tears in his eyes.

"Then I shall rest perfectly satisfied that you will never make these mistakes again. My confidence in you is as strong as it ever was, for there is always hope for one who voluntarily confesses a fault. So take courage and begin over again. You have the making of a smart man in you, Guy, and I hope to live to see you honored and respected."

These words were too much for Guy. Had Mr. Walker upbraided him, as he knew he deserved, the old spirit of recklessness and desperation, which Mrs. Willis had so nearly exorcised, would have come back to him, and he could have kept up a bold front; but the accents of kindness touched his heart.

He covered his face with his hands and wept bitterly. Mr. Walker waited until the violence of his grief had subsided and then continued:

"You have made all the amends in your power, Guy, and now I will help you to do the rest, so that you can begin over again in good shape. In the first place, you must return Mr. Whitney's money."

"Oh, Mr. Walker!" exclaimed Guy.

"It must be done!" said the merchant. "No half-way work will answer. I will furnish the funds, and I will also provide means for the payment of all your debts. I will be your only creditor. And when you have settled with all these men, Guy," he added earnestly," make a resolution and stick to it, that as long as you live you will never again go in debt. Wear a threadbare coat, if you must, but wear one that is paid for."

As Mr. Walker said this, he turned to his safe, and counting out a sum of money in bank-notes, handed it to Guy.

"I don't deserve this kindness, sir," said the boy, his tears starting out afresh.

"Yes, you do, Guy. I regard you as well worth saving."

The merchant passed out of the private office, and Guy, hastily wiping his eyes, went into the wash-room, where he spent a few minutes in removing all traces of his tears, after which he hurried out of the store and bent his steps toward the Olive Street Hotel.

"Bob Walker was a fool," thought Guy, feeling of his well-filled pocket-book to make sure that the scene through which he had just passed was a reality, and not a dream. "A boy who will run away from a father like that deserves to be hanged."

It required the exercise of all the courage Guy possessed to face Mr. Whitney, but being determined to go through with the good work so well begun in spite of every hazard, he boldly entered the hotel, and almost the first man he saw when he entered the reading-room was the swindled gentleman from Ann Arbor, who was pacing back and forth, with his hands under his coat-tails, and an expression of great melancholy on his face.

When he saw Guy approaching, he stopped and stared at him as if he could scarcely believe his eyes.

"Why, Benjamin," he cried, "is this really you? What made you two fellows run away and leave me in such a hurry last night?"

Guy did not know what to say to this. He did not want to spoil things by telling lies, so he concluded that it would be best not to answer the question at all.

"That man you saw me with last night left the city at eleven o'clock on business, and I have come to return your money," said Guy, taking out his pocket-book.

"Have you!" exclaimed Whitney, so overjoyed that his voice was husky.

"Yes. There are your fifty dollars, and if you will take a friend's advice, you will never make another bet with strangers."

"I don't think I ever shall," said Whitney, pocketing his recovered cash. "You have read me the best lesson I ever received. Do you know, it had been running in my head all the morning that I fell among thieves last night? Curious, wasn't it? Why, I have several times been on the point of starting for the police headquarters. That burglar-proof arrangement of Robinson's is a fine thing, I'll warrant. I guess it wasn't locked when we opened it the first time. I should like to go down to his store and see how it looks on his safe, but I have just received a telegram asking me to come immediately, for my mother is very ill, so I must be off by the first train. I could not have gone through, if you had not been good enough to return my money. Let's go and take something."

"No, sir; nothing for me," said Guy.

"A cigar, then?"

"No, I am obliged to you. Good-day. Thank goodness that job is done," said Guy, as he left the hotel, "and I am glad to get through with it so easily. Suppose Whitney had given the police a description of Jones and myself, and had us arrested. Whew! I'll not run another such a risk."

Guy made good use of his time, and by twelve o'clock he had called upon every one of his creditors and paid all his debts in full. The invitations to drink and smoke which he received were almost as numerous as the places he visited, but he firmly declined every one of them. He carried home with him a much lighter heart than he had brought away. He went straight to Mrs. Willis with the story of Mr. Walker's kindness, and had she been his own mother—as Guy wished from the bottom of his heart she was—she could not have been more delighted with the turn affairs had taken.

That day proved most emphatically to be the turning point of Guy's life. His choice had been made for all time. His subsequent career showed that Mrs. Willis had not been mistaken in her estimate of his character. His stability and fixedness of purpose surpassed her expectations. Never once did he forget his promise. And his performance in well-doing met with its reward. Long before he had time to repay the money advanced him by Mr. Walker, that gentleman promoted him to the position of assistant book-keeper, and Guy never gave him reason to regret the step.

Will Jones and his brother terminated their connection with the store on the very day Guy held his memorable interview with Mr. Walker. The former was discharged, and a dispatch sent after the commercial traveler commanding his immediate return to St. Louis; but Mr. Jones, scenting danger from afar, did not see fit to obey. Guy never heard of him afterward.

The scenes in the life of Guy Harris which I have attempted to describe in this story were enacted more than twelve years ago, and Guy has now become a man. Strict regard for truth compels me to say that he is neither a governor nor a member of the legislature; but he is a prosperous man and a happy one, and in the city in which he has taken up his abode there are none who are held in higher esteem than he.

Now and then he visits his father at Norwall, but he does it from a sense of duty and not for pleasure, for his

old home has no more attractions for him now than it had in the days of his boyhood. Between him and his relatives there is a great gulf fixed which they can all see, and which they know can never be bridged over. Mr. Harris is painfully conscious of the fact, and would willingly give every cent of his possessions to have it otherwise, but it is too late. "It might have been," but the favored hour has gone by. Guy's affections were long ago alienated. There are two people in the world, however, upon whom he bestows all the love of his ardent nature, and they are Mrs. Willis and Mr. Walker. If there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, are there not rich blessings laid up in store for those who lead that sinner to repentance?

A. L. Burt's Catalogue of Books for Young People by Popular Writers, 52-58 Duane Street, New York

BOOKS FOR BOYS.

Joe's Luck: A Boy's Adventures in California. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

The story is chock full of stirring incidents, while the amusing situations are furnished by Joshua Bickford, from Pumpkin Hollow, and the fellow who modestly styles himself the "Rip-tail Roarer, from Pike Co., Missouri." Mr. Alger never writes a poor book, and "Joe's Luck" is certainly one of his best.

Tom the Bootblack; or, The Road to Success. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

A bright, enterprising lad was Tom the Bootblack. He was not at all ashamed of his humble calling, though always on the lookout to better himself. The lad started for Cincinnati to look up his heritage. Mr. Grey, the uncle, did not hesitate to employ a ruffian to kill the lad. The plan failed, and Gilbert Grey, once Tom the bootblack, came into a comfortable fortune. This is one of Mr. Alger's best stories.

Dan the Newsboy. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Dan Mordaunt and his mother live in a poor tenement, and the lad is pluckily trying to make ends meet by selling papers in the streets of New York. A little heiress of six years is confided to the care of the Mordaunts. The child is kidnapped and Dan tracks the child to the house where she is hidden, and rescues her. The wealthy aunt of the little heiress is so delighted with Dan's courage and many good qualities that she adopts him as her heir.

Tony the Hero: A Brave Boy's Adventure with a Tramp. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Tony, a sturdy bright-eyed boy of fourteen, is under the control of Rudolph Rugg, a thorough rascal. After much abuse Tony runs away and gets a job as stable boy in a country hotel. Tony is heir to a large estate. Rudolph for a consideration hunts up Tony and throws him down a deep well. Of course Tony escapes from the fate provided for him, and by a brave act, a rich friend secures his rights and Tony is prosperous. A very entertaining book.

The Errand Boy; or, How Phil Brent Won Success. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth illustrated, price $1.00.

The career of "The Errand Boy" embraces the city adventures of a smart country lad. Philip was brought up by a kind-hearted innkeeper named Brent. The death of Mrs. Brent paved the way for the hero's subsequent troubles. A retired merchant in New York secures him the situation of errand boy, and thereafter stands as his friend.

Tom Temple's Career. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Tom Temple is a bright, self-reliant lad. He leaves Plympton village to seek work in New York, whence he undertakes an important mission to California. Some of his adventures in the far west are so startling that the reader will scarcely close the book until the last page shall have been reached. The tale is written in Mr. Alger's most fascinating style.

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BOOKS FOR BOYS.

Frank Fowler, the Cash Boy. By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Frank Fowler, a poor boy, bravely determines to make a living for himself and his foster-sister Grace. Going to New York he obtains a situation as cash boy in a dry goods store. He renders a service to a wealthy old gentleman who takes a fancy to the lad, and thereafter helps the lad to gain success and fortune.

Tom Thatcher's Fortune. By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Tom Thatcher is a brave, ambitious, unselfish boy. He supports his mother and sister on meagre wages earned as a shoe-pegger in John Simpson's factory. Tom is discharged from the factory and starts overland for California. He meets with many adventures. The story is told in a way which has made Mr. Alger's name a household word in so many homes.

The Train Boy. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo,

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Paul Palmer was a wide-awake boy of sixteen who supported his mother and sister by selling books and papers on the Chicago and Milwaukee Railroad. He detects a young man in the act of picking the pocket of a young lady. In a railway accident many passengers are killed, but Paul is fortunate enough to assist a Chicago merchant, who out of gratitude takes him into his employ. Paul succeeds with tact and judgment and is well started on the road to business prominence.

Mark Mason's Victory. The Trials and Triumphs of

a Telegraph Boy. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Mark Mason, the telegraph boy, was a sturdy, honest lad, who pluckily won his way to success by his honest manly efforts under many difficulties. This story will please the very large class of boys who regard Mr. Alger as a favorite author.

A Debt of Honor. The Story of Gerald Lane's Success

in the Far West. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

The story of Gerald Lane and the account of the many trials and disappointments which he passed through before he attained success, will interest all boys who have read the previous stories of this delightful author.

Ben Bruce. Scenes in the Life of a Bowery Newsboy.

By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Ben Bruce was a brave, manly, generous boy. The story of his efforts, and many seeming failures and disappointments, and his final success, are most interesting to all readers. The tale is written in Mr. Alger's most fascinating style.

The Castaways; or, On the Florida Reefs. By JAMES

OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

This tale smacks of the salt sea. From the moment that the Sea Queen leaves lower New York bay till the breeze leaves her becalmed off the coast of Florida, one can almost hear the whistle of the wind through her rigging, the creak of her straining cordage as she heels to the leeward. The adventures of Ben Clark, the hero of the story and Jake the cook, cannot fail to charm the reader. As a writer for young people Mr. Otis is a prime favorite.

BOOKS FOR BOYS.

Wrecked on Spider Island; or, How Ned Rogers Found the Treasure. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Ned Rogers, a "down-east" plucky lad ships as cabin boy to earn a livelihood. Ned is marooned on Spider Island, and while there discovers a wreck submerged in the sand, and finds a considerable amount of treasure. The capture of the treasure and the incidents of the voyage serve to make as entertaining a story of sea-life as the most captious boy could desire.

The Search for the Silver City: A Tale of Adventure in Yucatan. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Two lads, Teddy Wright and Neal Emery, embark on the steam yacht Day Dream for a cruise to the tropics. The yacht is destroyed by fire, and then the boat is cast upon the coast of Yucatan. They hear of the wonderful Silver City, of the Chan Santa Cruz Indians, and with the help of a faithful Indian ally carry off a number of the golden images from the temples. Pursued with relentless vigor at last their escape is effected in an astonishing manner. The story is so full of exciting incidents that the reader is quite carried away with the novelty and realism of the narrative.

A Runaway Brig; or, An Accidental Cruise. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

This is a sea tale, and the reader can look out upon the wide shimmering sea as it flashes back the sunlight, and imagine himself afloat with Harry Vandyne, Walter Morse, Jim Libby and that old shell-back, Bob Brace, on the brig Bonita. The boys discover a mysterious document which enables them to find a buried treasure. They are stranded on an island and at last are rescued with the treasure. The boys are sure to be fascinated with this entertaining story.

The Treasure Finders: A Boy's Adventures in Nicaragua. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Roy and Dean Coloney, with their guide Tongla, leave their father's indigo plantation to visit the wonderful ruins of an ancient city. The boys eagerly explore the temples of an extinct race and discover three golden images cunningly hidden away. They escape with the greatest difficulty. Eventually they reach safety with their golden prizes. We doubt if there ever was written a more entertaining story than "The Treasure Finders."

Jack, the Hunchback. A Story of the Coast of Maine. By JAMES OTIS. Price $1.00.

This is the story of a little hunchback who lived on Cape Elizabeth, on the coast of Maine. His trials and successes are most interesting. From first to last nothing stays the interest of the narrative. It bears us along as on a stream whose current varies in direction, but never loses its force.

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Three Philadelphia lads assist the American spies and make regular and frequent visits to Valley Forge in the Winter while the British occupied the city. The story abounds with pictures of Colonial life skillfully drawn, and the glimpses of Washington's soldiers which are given shown that the work has not been hastily done, or without considerable study. The story is wholesome and patriotic in tone, as are all of Mr. Otis' works.

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Two lads from Portmouth, N. H., attempt to enlist in the Colonial Army, and are given employment as spies. There is no lack of exciting incidents which the youthful reader craves, but it is healthful excitement brimming with facts which every boy should be familiar with, and while the reader is following the adventures of Ben Jaffrays and Ned Allen he is acquiring a fund of historical lore which will remain in his memory long after that which he has memorized from text-books has been forgotten.

At the Siege of Havana. Being the Experiences of

Three Boys Serving under Israel Putnam in 1762. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, ornamental cloth, olivine edges, illustrated, price $1.50.

"At the Siege of Havana" deals with that portion of the island's history when the English king captured the capital, thanks to the assistance given by the troops from New England, led in part by Col. Israel Putnam.

The principal characters are Darius Lunt, the lad who, represented as telling the story, and his comrades, Robert Clement and Nicholas Vallet. Colonel Putnam also figures to considerable extent, necessarily, in the tale, and the whole forms one of the most readable stories founded on historical facts.

The Defense of Fort Henry. A Story of Wheeling

Creek in 1777. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, ornamental cloth, olivine edges, illustrated, price $1.50.

Nowhere in the history of our country can be found more heroic or thrilling incidents than in the story of those brave men and women who founded the settlement of Wheeling in the Colony of Virginia. The recital of what Elizabeth Zane did is in itself as heroic a story as can be imagined. The wondrous bravery displayed by Major McCulloch and his gallant comrades, the sufferings of the colonists and their sacrifice of blood and life, stir the blood of old as well as young readers.

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With Warren at Bunker Hill. A Story of the Siege of

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"This is a tale of the siege of Boston, which opens on the day after the doings at Lexington and Concord, with a description of home life in Boston, introduces the reader to the British camp at Charlestown, shows Gen. Warren at home, describes what a boy thought of the battle of Bunker Hill, and closes with the raising of the siege. The three heroes, George Wentworth, Ben Scarlett and an old ropemaker, incur the enmity of a young Tory, who causes them many adventures the boys will like to read."—Detroit Free Press.

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With the Swamp Fox. The Story of General Marion's Spies. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

This story deals with General Francis Marion's heroic struggle in the Carolinas. General Marion's arrival to take command of these brave men and rough riders is pictured as a boy might have seen it, and although the story is devoted to what the lads did, the Swamp Fox is ever present in the mind of the reader.

On the Kentucky Frontier. A Story of the Fighting Pioneers of the West. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.

In the history of our country there is no more thrilling story than that of the work done on the Mississippi river by a handful of frontiersmen. Mr. Otis takes the reader on that famous expedition from the arrival of Major Clarke's force at Corn Island, until Kaskaskia was captured. He relates that part of Simon Kenton's life history which is not usually touched upon either by the historian or the story teller. This is one of the most entertaining books for young people which has been published.

Sarah Dillard's Ride. A Story of South Carolina in in 1780. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

"This book deals with the Carolinas in 1780, giving a wealth of detail of the Mountain Men who struggled so valiantly against the king's troops. Major Ferguson is the prominent British officer of the story, which is told as though coming from a youth who experienced these adventures. In this way the famous ride of Sarah Dillard is brought out as an incident of the plot."—Boston Journal.

A Tory Plot. A Story of the Attempt to Kill General Washington. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

"'A Tory Plot' is the story of two lads who overhear something of the plot originated during the Revolution by Gov. Tryon to capture or murder Washington. They communicate their knowledge to Gen. Putnam and are commissioned by him to play the role of detectives in the matter. They do so, and meet with many adventures and hairbreadth escapes. The boys are, of course, mythical, but they serve to enable the author to put into very attractive shape much valuable knowledge concerning one phase of the Revolution."—Pittsburgh Times.

A Traitor's Escape. A Story of the Attempt to Seize Benedict Arnold. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated. price $1.00.

"This is a tale with stirring scenes depicted in each chapter, bringing clearly before the mind the glorious deeds of the early settlers in this country. In an historical work dealing with this country's past, no plot can hold the attention closer than this one, which describes the attempt and partial success of Benedict Arnold's escape to New York, where he remained as the guest of Sir Henry Clinton. All those who actually figured in the arrest of the traitor, as well as Gen. Washington, are included as characters."—Albany Union.

A Cruise with Paul Jones. A Story of Naval Warfare in 1776. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

"This story takes up that portion of Paul Jones' adventurous life when he was hovering off the British coast, watching for an opportunity to strike the enemy a blow. It deals more particularly with his descent upon Whitehaven, the seizure of Lady Selkirk's plate, and the famous battle with the Drake. The boy who figures in the tale is one who was taken from a derelict by Paul Jones shortly after this particular cruise was begun."—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

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Morgan, the Jersey Spy. A Story of the Siege of Yorktown in 1781. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

"The two lads who are utilized by the author to emphasize the details of the work done during that memorable time were real boys who lived on the banks of the York river, and who aided the Jersey spy in his dangerous occupation. In the guise of fishermen the lads visit Yorktown, are suspected of being spies, and put under arrest. Morgan risks his life to save them. The final escape, the thrilling encounter with a squad of red coats, when they are exposed equally to the bullets of friends and foes, told in a masterly fashion, makes of this volume one of the most entertaining books of the year."—Inter-Ocean.

The Young Scout: The Story of a West Point Lieutenant. By EDWARD S. ELLIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

The crafty Apache chief Geronimo but a few years ago was the most terrible scourge of the southwest border. The author has woven, in a tale of thrilling interest, all the incidents of Geronimo's last raid. The hero is Lieutenant James Decker, a recent graduate of West Point. Ambitious to distinguish himself the young man takes many a desperate chance against the enemy and on more than one occasion narrowly escapes with his life. In our opinion Mr. Ellis is the best writer of Indian stories now before the public.

Adrift in the Wilds: The Adventures of Two Shipwrecked Boys. By EDWARD S. ELLIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Elwood Brandon and Howard Lawrence are en route for San Francisco. Off the coast of California the steamer takes fire. The two boys reach the shore with several of the passengers. Young Brandon becomes separated from his party and is captured by hostile Indians, but is afterwards rescued. This is a very entertaining narrative of Southern California.

A Young Hero; or, Fighting to Win. By EDWARD S. ELLIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

This story tells how a valuable solid silver service was stolen from the Misses Perkinpine, two very old and simple minded ladies. Fred Sheldon, the hero of this story, undertakes to discover the thieves and have them arrested. After much time spent in detective work, he succeeds in discovering the silver plate and winning the reward. The story is told in Mr. Ellis' most fascinating style. Every boy will be glad to read this delightful book.

Lost in the Rockies. A Story of Adventure in the Rocky Mountains. By EDWARD S. ELLIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.

Incident succeeds incident, and adventure is piled upon adventure, and at the end the reader, be he boy or man, will have experienced breathless enjoyment in this romantic story describing many adventures in the Rockies and among the Indians.

BOOKS FOR BOYS.

A Jaunt Through Java: The Story of a Journey to the Sacred Mountain. By EDWARD S. ELLIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

The interest of this story is found in the thrilling adventures of two cousins, Hermon and Eustace Hadley, on their trip acrosss the island of Java, from Samarang to the Sacred Mountain. In a land where the Royal Bengal tiger, the rhinoceros, and other fierce beasts are to be met with, it is but natural that the heroes of this book should have a lively experience. There is not a dull page in the book.

The Boy Patriot. A Story of Jack, the Young Friend of Washington. By EDWARD S. ELLIS. 12mo, cloth, olivine edges, illustrated, price $1.50.

"There are adventures of all kinds for the hero and his friends, whose pluck and ingenuity in extricating themselves from awkward fixes are always equal to the occasion. It is an excellent story full of honest, manly, patriotic efforts on the part of the hero. A very vivid description of the battle of Trenton is also found in this story."—Journal of Education.

A Yankee Lad's Pluck. How Bert Larkin Saved his Father's Ranch in Porto Rico. By WM. P. CHIPMAN. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

"Bert Larkin, the hero of the story, early excites our admiration, and is altogether a fine character such as boys will delight in, whilst the story of his numerous adventures is very graphically told. This will, we think, prove one of the most popular boys' books this season."—Gazette.

A Brave Defense. A Story of the Massacre at Fort Griswold in 1781. By WILLIAM P. CHIPMAN. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Perhaps no more gallant fight against fearful odds took place during the Revolutionary War than that at Fort Griswold, Groton Heights, Conn., in 1781. The boys are real boys who were actually on the muster rolls, either at Fort Trumbull on the New London side, or of Fort Griswold on the Groton side of the Thames. The youthful reader who follows Halsey Sanford and Levi Dart and Tom Malleson, and their equally brave comrades, through their thrilling adventures will be learning something more than historical facts; they will be imbibing lessons of fidelity, of bravery, of heroism, and of manliness, which must prove serviceable in the arena of life.

The Young Minuteman. A Story of the Capture of General Prescott in 1777. By WILLIAM P. CHIPMAN. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

This story is based upon actual events which occurred during the British occupation of the waters of Narragansett Bay. Darius Wale and William Northrop belong to "the coast patrol." The story is a strong one, dealing only with actual events. There is, however, no lack of thrilling adventure, and every lad who is fortunate enough to obtain the book will find not only that his historical knowledge is increased, but that his own patriotism and love of country are deepened.

For the Temple: A Tale of the Fall of Jerusalem. By G. A. HENTY. With illustrations by S. J. SOLOMON. 12mo, cloth, olivine edges, price $1.00.

"Mr. Henty's graphic prose picture of the hopeless Jewish resistance to Roman sway adds another leaf to his record of the famous wars of the world. The book is one of Mr. Henty's cleverest efforts."—Graphic.

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Roy Gilbert's Search: A Tale of the Great Lakes. By Wm. P. Chipman. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

A deep mystery hangs over the parentage of Roy Gilbert. He arranges with two schoolmates to make a tour of the Great Lakes on a steam launch. The three boys visit many points of interest on the lakes. Afterwards the lads rescue an elderly gentleman and a lady from a sinking yacht. Later on the boys narrowly escape with their lives. The hero is a manly, self-reliant boy, whose adventures will be followed with interest.

The Slate Picker: The Story of a Boy's Life in the Coal Mines. By Harry Prentice. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

This is a story of a boy's life in the coal mines of Pennsylvania. Ben Burton, the hero, had a hard road to travel, but by grit and energy he advanced step by step until he found himself called upon to fill the position of chief engineer of the Kohinoor Coal Company. This is a book of extreme interest to every boy reader.

The Boy Cruisers; or, Paddling in Florida. By St. George Rathborne. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00

Andrew George and Rowland Carter start on a canoe trip along the Gulf coast, from Key West to Tampa, Florida. Their first adventure is with a pair of rascals who steal their boats. Next they run into a gale in the Gulf. After that they have a lively time with alligators and Andrew gets into trouble with a band of Seminole Indians. Mr. Rathborne knows just how to interest the boys, and lads who are in search of a rare treat will do well to read this entertaining story.

Captured by Zulus: A Story of Trapping in Africa. By Harry Prentice. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

This story details the adventures of two lads, Dick Elsworth and Bob Harvey, in the wilds of South Africa. By stratagem the Zulus capture Dick and Bob and take them to their principal kraal or village. The lads escape death by dig ing their way out of the prison hut by night. They are pursued, but the Zulus finally give up pursuit. Mr. Prentice tells exactly how wild-beast collectors secure specimens on their native stamping grounds, and these descriptions make very entertaining reading.

Tom the Ready; or, Up from the Lowest. By Randolph Hill. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

This is a dramatic narrative of the unaided rise of a fearless, ambitious boy from the lowest round of fortune's ladder to wealth and the governorship of his native State. Tom Seacomb begins life with a purpose, and eventually overcomes those who oppose him. How he manages to win the battle is told by Mr. Hill in a masterful way that thrills the reader and holds his attention and sympathy to the end.

Captain Kidd's Gold: The True Story of an Adventurous Sailor Boy. By James Franklin Fitts. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

There is something fascinating to the average youth in the very idea of buried treasure. A vision arises before his eyes of swarthy Portuguese and Spanish rascals, with black beards and gleaming eyes. There were many famous sea rovers, but none more celebrated than Capt. Kidd. Paul Jones Garry inherits a document which locates a considerable treasure buried by two of Kidd's crew. The hero of this book is an ambitious, persevering lad, of salt-water New England ancestry, and his efforts to reach the island and secure the money form one of the most absorbing tales for our youth that has come from the press.

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BOOKS FOR BOYS.

The Boy Explorers: The Adventures of Two Boys in Alaska. By HARRY PRENTICE. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Two boys, Raymond and Spencer Manning, travel to Alaska to join their father in search of their uncle. On their arrival at Sitka the boys with an Indian guide set off across the mountains. The trip is fraught with perils that test the lads' courage to the utmost. All through their exciting adventures the lads demonstrate what can be accomplished by pluck and resolution, and their experience makes one of the most interesting tales ever written.

The Island Treasure; or, Harry Darrel's Fortune. By FRANK H. CONVERSE. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Harry Darrel, having received a nautical training on a school-ship, is bent on going to sea. A runaway horse changes his prospects. Harry saves Dr. Gregg from drowning and afterward becomes sailing-master of a sloop yacht. Mr. Converse's stories possess a charm of their own which is appreciated by lads who delight in good healthy tales that smack of salt water.

Guy Harris: The Runaway. By HARRY CASTLEMON. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

Guy Harris lived in a small city on the shore of one of the Great Lakes. He is persuaded to go to sea, and gets a glimpse of the rough side of life in a sailor's boarding house. He ships on a vessel and for five months leads a hard life. The book will interest boys generally on account of its graphic style. This is one of Castlemon's most attractive stories.

Julian Mortimer: A Brave Boy's Struggle for Home and Fortune. By HARRY CASTLEMON. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.

The scene of the story lies west of the Mississippi River, in the days when emigrants made their perilous way across the great plains to the land of gold. There is an attack upon the wagon train by a large party of Indians. Our hero is a lad of uncommon nerve and pluck. Befriended by a stalwart trapper, a real rough diamond, our hero achieves the most happy results.

By Pike and Dyke: A Tale of the Rise of the Dutch Republic. By G. A. HENTY. With illustrations by MAYNARD BROWN. 12mo, cloth, olivine edges, price $1.00.

"Boys with a turn for historical research will be enchanted with the book, while the rest who only care for adventure will be students in spite of themselves."—St. James's Gazette.

St. George for England: A Tale of Cressy and Poitiers. By G. A. HENTY. With illustrations by GORDON BROWNE. 12mo, cloth, olivine edges, price $1.00.

"A story of very great interest for boys. In his own forcible style the author has endeavored to show that determination and enthusiasm can accomplish marvellous results; and that courage is generally accompanied by magnanimity and gentlepess."—Pall Mall Gazette.

Captain Bayley's Heir: A Tale of the Gold Fields of California. By G. A. HENTY. With illustrations by H. M. PAGET. 12mo, cloth, olivine edges, price $1.00.

"Mr. Henty is careful to mingle instruction with entertainment; and the humorous touches, especially in the sketch of John Holl, the Westminster dustman, Dickens himself could hardly have excelled."—Christian Leader.

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BOOKS FOR BOYS.

Budd Boyd's Triumph; or, The Boy Firm of Fox Island.

By WILLIAM P. CHIPMAN. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1.00.

The scene of this story is laid on the upper part of Narragansett Bay, and the leading incidents have a strong salt-water flavor. The two boys, Budd Boyd and Judd Floyd, being ambitious and clear sighted, form a partnership to catch and sell fish. Budd's pluck and good sense carry him through many troubles. In following the career of the boy firm of Boyd & Floyd, the youthful reader will find a useful lesson—that industry and perseverance are bound to lead to ultimate success.

Lost in the Canyon: Sam Willett's Adventures on the

Great Colorado. By ALFRED R. CALHOUN. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price $1,

This story hinges on a fortune left to Sam Willett, the hero, and the fact that it will pass to a disreputable relative if the lad dies before he shall have reached his majority. The story of his father's peril and of Sam's desperate trip down the great canyon on a raft, and how the party finally escape from their perils is described in a graphic style that stamps Mr. Calhoun as a master of his art.

Captured by Apes: The Wonderful Adventures of a

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